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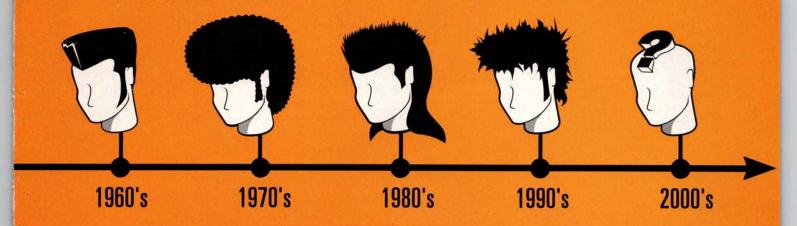


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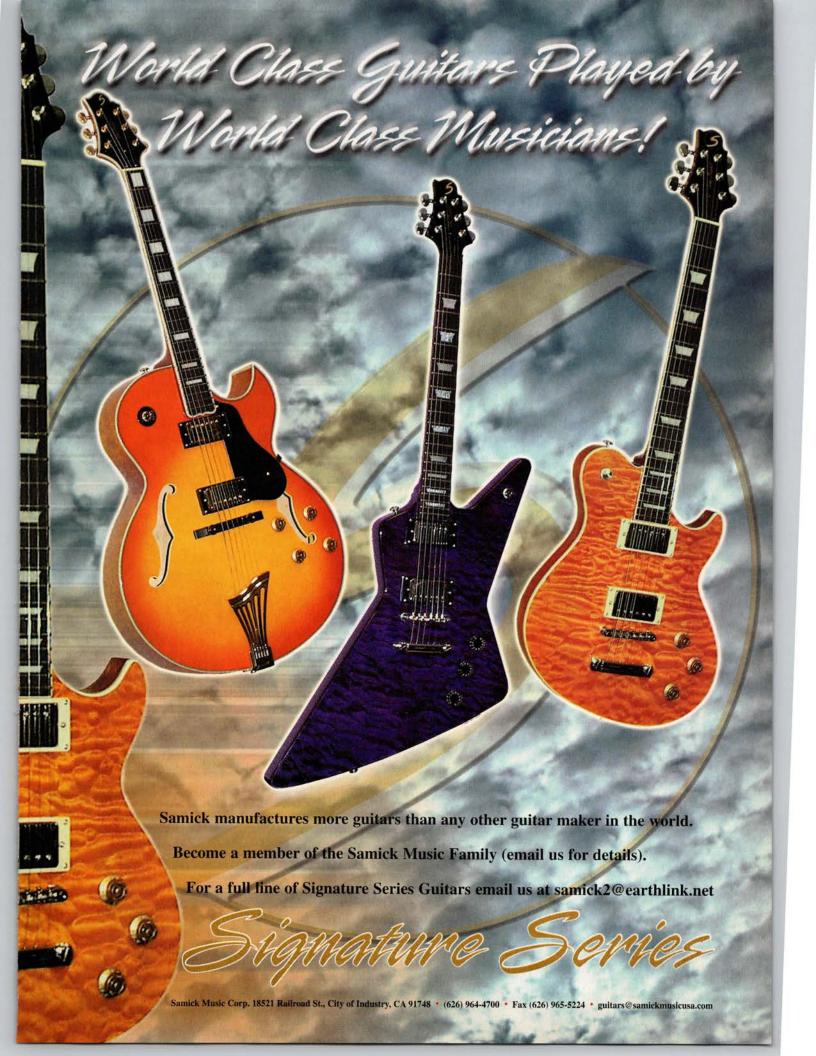
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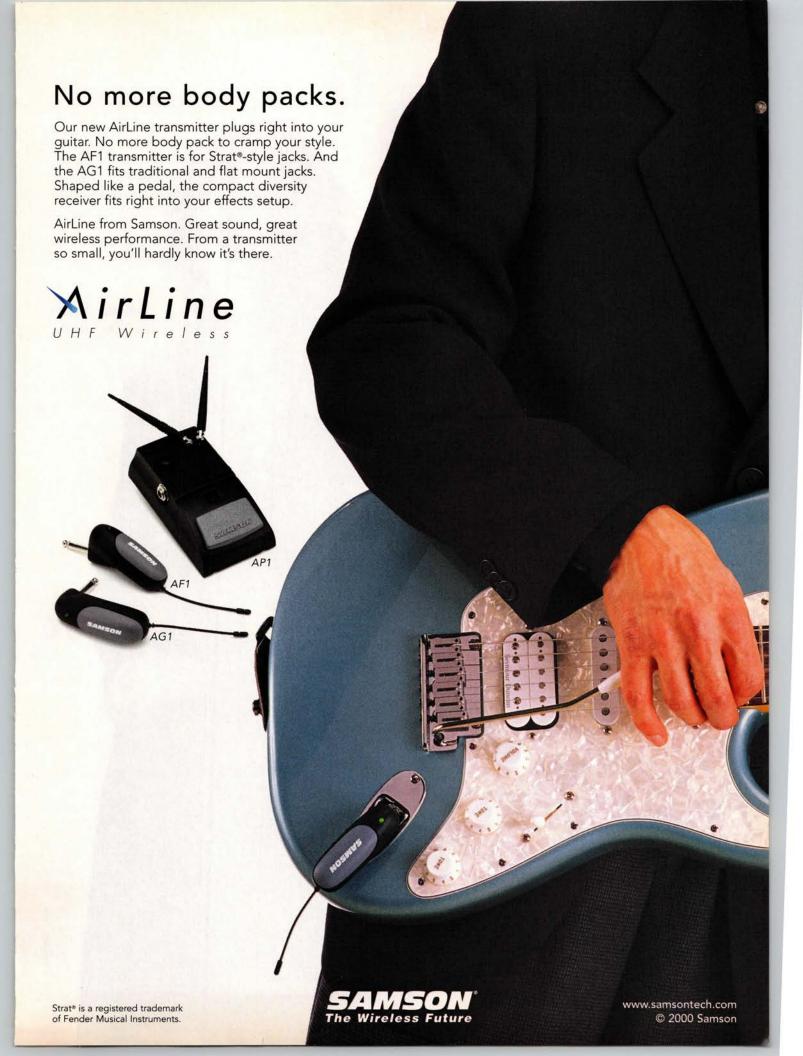
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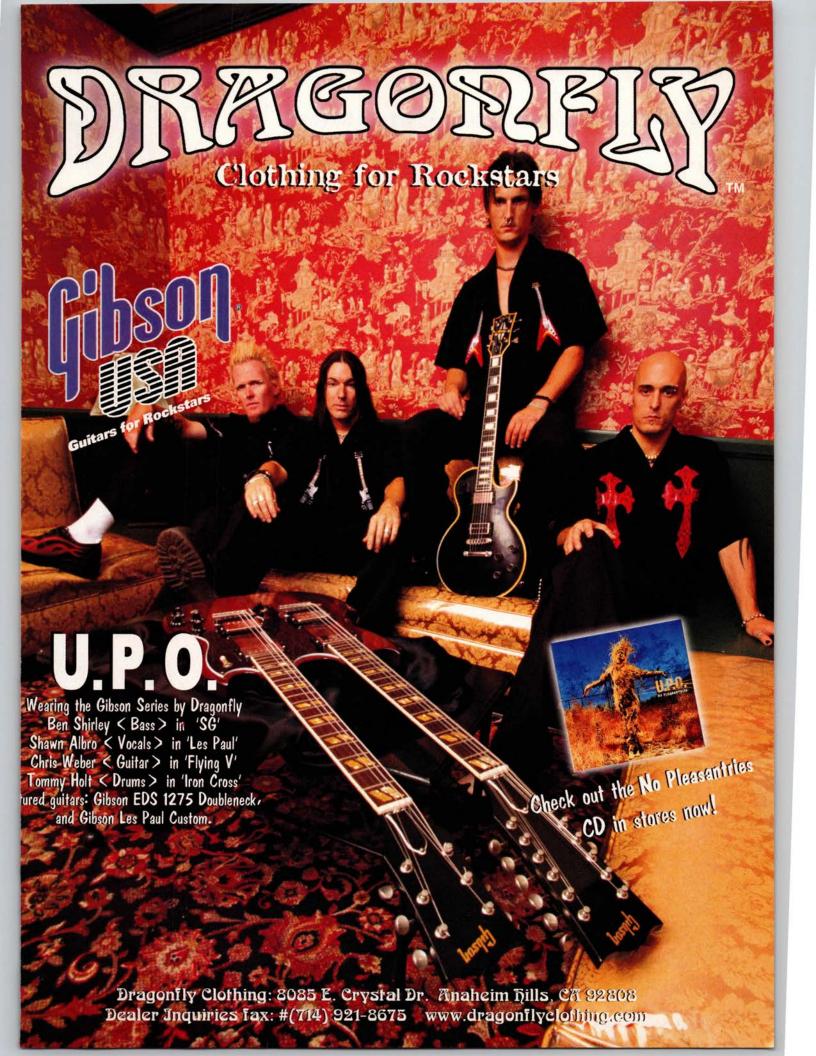


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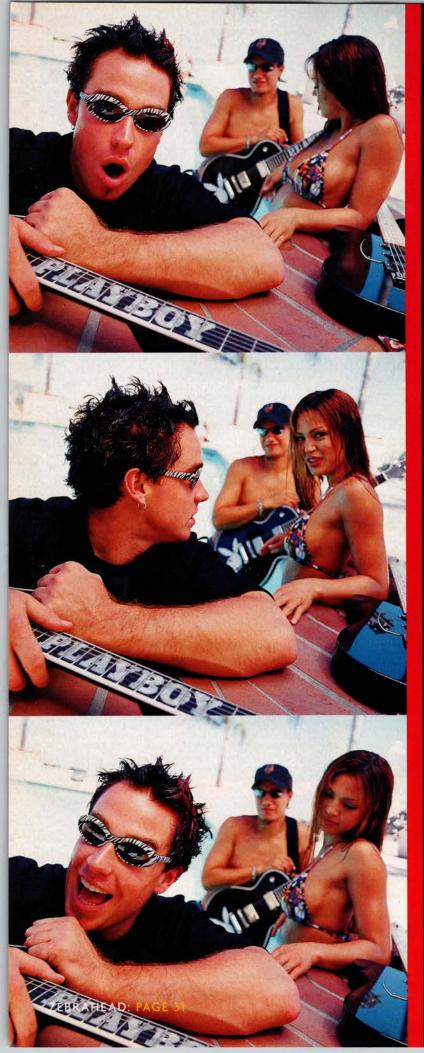




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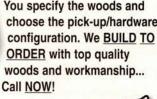


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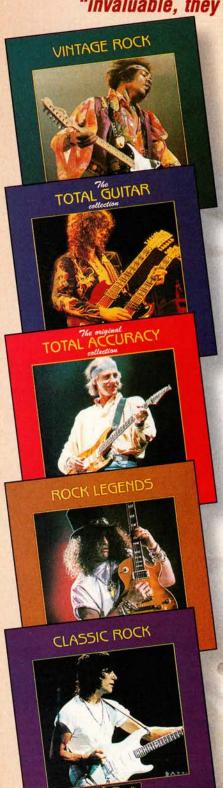
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Woodshed

I've been writing this column for over a decade.

but rarely do I talk about my personal life. I pretty much file that under "Does anybody really care?" However, on the 30th anniversary of Jimi Hendrix's death, I thought I'd make an exception, because I have a story that illustrates how one man's music can change your life.

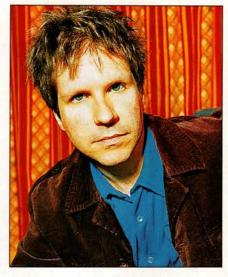
When I was in my early teens, like many of you, I was struggling to learn how to play the guitar. Part of my problem was my gear. The combination of a small Fender Champ amp and a profoundly crappy Japanese six-string made it literally impossible for me to produce the singing, sustained lead guitar sounds of my guitar heroes.

Then, one day while I was listening to Hendrix's live masterpiece Band of Gypsys, my mom said something that stopped me dead in my tracks. While she tolerated most of my music, she drew the line at Jimi's feedbackdrenched extravaganza "Machine Gun."

"It sounds like somebody playing an out-oftune violin," she said derisively.

I thought about her comment for a moment, and while I didn't agree with the "out-of-tune" part, I decided that she was onto something. And what I did next was, admittedly, a bit crazy.

The following week, I convinced my parents to



produce Hendrix's singing, sustained sound on the guitar, maybe I could on a violin. After all, pulling a bow over the stings of a fiddle would allow me to sustain notes for as long as I pleased. And with some amplification, who knows...

Besides, how could my parents say no to renting a violin? Learning to master a classical instrument was infinitely better than becoming a degenerate rocker. Little did they know, I was planning to use the fiddle in a degenerate way-I was going to become the Hendrix of the violin!

But the joke was on me. As soon as I got the instrument, I became obsessed, practicing four or five hours every day. Much to my surrent a violin for me. I reasoned that if I couldn't prise, I also began developing an appetite for

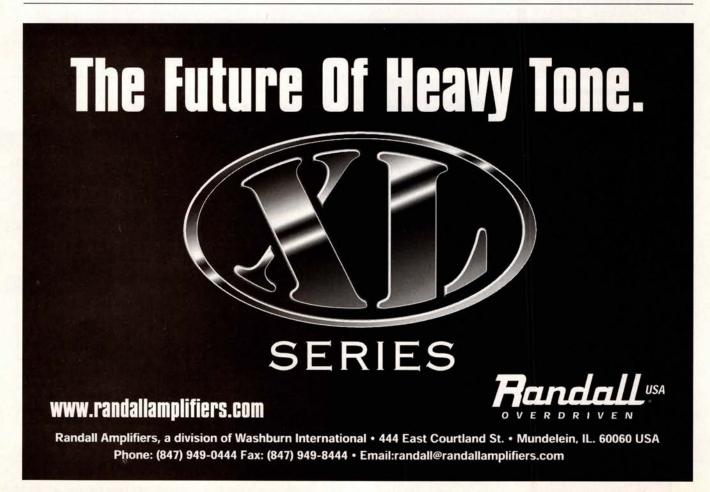
classical music as well as improvising jazz violinists like Jean-Luc Ponty, Jerry Goodman and Stephane Grappelli. Additionally, I became friendly with several musicians who began turning me onto the wild sounds of such avantgarde composers as John Cage and Bela Bartok. My musical horizons literally exploded.

While I never lost my love for rock (I bought an electric violin as well as a kick-ass guitar and amp), my musical goals changed over the next several years-especially the one of becoming the Hendrix of the violin. While learning about other forms of music, I began to grasp just what a genius Hendrix was, and I realized I would never approach his greatness no matter what instrument I played. But that didn't bum me out, because along the way I became a pretty good musician in my own right.

Eventually, I left my home in Taylor, Michigan, to pursue a career in music in New York, where I played in bands and sweated it out as a freelance journalist, until one day our publisher, Dennis Page, plucked me out of obscurity to command Guitar World, the world's greatest guitar magazine. And the rest is history.

And just think, it all started with a little Hendrix. Cheers, Jimi, wherever you are-and thanks, once again.

-BRAD TOLINSKI Editor-in-Chief



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MAD PROPS

Thanks for the Kirk Hammett cover story. [Sept. '00] It's nice to see you give respect to a real metal guitarist rather than some dork who plays a sevenstring guitar in a rap band. I also loved the My First Band story and the Les Paul article. The transcription of Black Sabbath's "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath" was the best tab I've ever seen for that song—and as someone who plays both guitar and bass, I must say that the new notation format is great.

—D.K.

Prince George, B.C., Canada

Thanks for putting out yet another kick-ass issue of Guitar World. Kirk Hammett is everything I want to be as a guitar player—he's a true guitar hero. And let's not forget Mark Tremonti. I've been trying to figure out Creed's "Higher" for the longest time, and now, thanks to your lesson with Mark in the September issue, I can wail on that song! Every month it's something bigger, badder and better. Guitar World rules!

-Anthony Long Bayside, NY

RIDE THE PORCELAIN

Thanks for the great article on Ween in the September issue. It's about time those boys got the recognition they deserve. But what's up with the poster of Kirk Hammett sitting on the toilet? "Sad But True" indeed! -Nate Harrington

I will have nightmares for years over Kirk Hammett's bathtub and toilet photos. And to think, my parents used to complain about Marilyn Manson.

> -Cranialbill via email

KIRK HAMMETT...BAD!

A Kirk Hammett cover was extremely disappointing and pointless given the fact that so many fans have reacted negatively to Metallica's stance against Napster. These assholes piss all over their fans and they still get a magazine cover. What a load of crap. Next time, try covering an artist who's in a band that gives a shit about its fans!

> -Mike via email

TREMONTI IS GOD

Thanks for the interview with Mark Tremonti. Just recently I



HAPPY HOUR

The "My First Band" story was really interesting. I'm probably going to start a garage band of my own soon, and now I know some pointers on how to start a good one.

-s guerin15 via email this article made me not only want to run to the store to buy their CD Human Clay but also pick up my guitar and start playing their songs.

> -lennifer Mieczkowski Providence, RI

BROTHER IN ARMS

Smashing Pumpkins, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Foo Fighters, Korn, Kittie, the Who, the Rolling Stones, Kid Rock...all good in their own way. However, I have one question for you: Where the brothers at? Where are people like Vernon Reid or Ernie Isley. Ernie learned how to play as a child, literally at Jimi Hendrix's knee. Take it from me, Ernie Isley is a nasty mo-fo. And how 'bout Bootsy Collins? Without him, bass wouldn't be as phat a place. The only people I ever see in Guitar World who look like me are Gatemouth Brown, B.B. King and the rest of the acknowledged blues vanguard. I'm not hateful-in fact. I've been a longtime reader and intend to stay that way. Just do the world a favor and give your readers some more, umm, "colorful" content. I'm out...

> -Reggie May Yonkers, NY

PAPA CHUBBY

I had been searching all over for a transcription of "Last Resort" by Papa Roach, and I was really frantic because I had my first gig coming up in a few weeks and I needed to learn the song. Then your October issue landed on my doorstep-"Last Resort" transcription and all! I am now a lifelong subscriber to Guitar World.

> -Josh Zalegowski Cherry Valley, MA



Your album review of Rancid's new album was great-Brian Stillman did an awesome job. True punk will always rule, and Rancid is carrying the banner.

-Stupid08 via email

IN THE BEGINNING...

Thanks for the "My First Band" story. [Sept. '00] I, too, play in a band, and it was really motivating to read about what these bands have gone through on their way to the top.

> -Mike Drummonds via email

I couldn't put down your September issue. Being an aspiring guitar player, it was amazing to read about how the guitar players from bands like Lit, Godsmack and Static-X got started. Reading this article made me want to really keep practicing, and gave me a refreshing new look at how cool it is to play. I love this magazine!

Marcy Hiratzka via email

Kirk Hammett naked sitting on the potty? Hammett may be a guitar god, but even gods wear clothes. I hung it up anyway.

-Bryan via email

SHOCK ME

I was not at all expecting to see a Tune Up on TapRoot [Sept. '00]. They are one of the best new bands that have come out this entire year. Keep it up!

> -Logan via email

STROKING PUSSY

I wasn't a big fan of Kittie until I read the 60 Minutes with guitarists Fallon Bowman and Morgan Lander in your September issue. I appreciated what Fallon said about Nirvana. I hope the new generation of music fan hasn't forgotten about them. Thank you, Kittie!

> -Brad Shenkle via email



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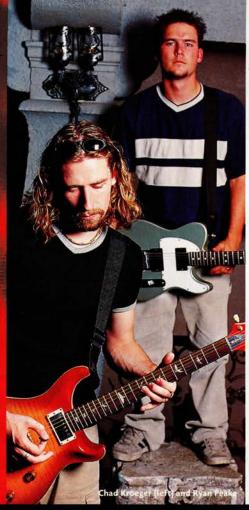
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TUNEUPS On Rage Against the Machine's upcoming live album, Tom Morello says the group has things covered—literally. According to the guitarist, the double-CD set will feature one disc of songs from Rage's performances at San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium this past August and a second disc of cover versions that the group recorded in the studio with producer Rick Rubin. The release will appear in stores this fall, and a DVD version is also planned. "It's a pretty diverse set of songs," Morello says of the second disc, which includes covers of the Rolling Stones' "Street Fighting Man," Rush's "Working Man," Devo's "Beautiful World" and the Bob Dylan classic "Maggie's Farm." Some Stooges and Minor Threat songs were also being considered, along with a version of the MC5's "Kick Out the Jams" featuring the group's guitarist, Wayne Kramer. "Basically, I consider all of the cover songs we're doing as new Rage songs," says Morello. "They feature completely original Rage Against the Machine music with the lyrics of the original song set to a brand-new tune. My favorite cover songs have always been like Jimi Hendrix's 'All Along the Watchtower,' where he made a complete remake of Dylan's original. That's was what we attempted to do with Bruce Springsteen's 'The Ghost of Tom Joad when we remade it back in 1997.' Morello says Rage took a similar approach to reinvigorating its own material in the live setting. "The one thing that we do best is play live, and aven't yet documented that in the way I think that we can. We want o make the definitive Rage record—like the Who's Live at Leeds, where the essence of the band is distilled into a live recording." —Gary Graff FRANK FORCINO NOVEMBER 2000 GUITAR WORLD 29



after the band releases its next studio album. Starring Mel Gibson and Tim Roth, the movie is about the residents of a run-down L.A. apartment building who are investigated by the FBI after one of the residents dies mysteriously. The Million Dollar Hotel won a Silver Berlin Bear award for outstanding achievement at the Berlin Film Festival last February.



NICKELBACK ROCK CLIMBERS

Growing up in Hanna, a tiny, isolated farming town in the Canadian province of Alberta, the members of Nickelback were a good three-hour drive from anything resembling a city. Worse, they had but one selection on their radio dial: an AM station that broadcast country by day and church services by night. Maybe that's why they picked up instruments and began making music themselves.

"There wasn't much else to do in Hanna except play music or get into trouble," says Chad Kroeger, the group's singer and guitarist. "I did

plenty of both."

Nickelback formed five years ago, after Kroeger, his bass-playing brother Mike and lead guitarist Ryan Peake moved to Vancouver. They started out as a cover band, but once Chad began writing more material, the trio quickly developed its own sound, drawing a wide range of influences into its straight-forward rock.

influences into its straight-forward rock.

"I come up with the skeleton for the song, then everybody else throws their own spice into the spaghetti sauce," says Kroeger. "And they add a lot, because everyone has very different tastes. Mike is a metal guy, Ryan Peake is Mr. Melodic, and our drummer is into jazz."

The result is the punchy, crunchy swagger of *The State* (Roadrunner), the Canadian quartet's American debut. Thanks to the singles "Breathe" and "Leader of Men," as well as touring spots with groups that include Creed and Sevendust, Nickelback has begun the long process of making a name for itself.

"We're just trying to get a foothold in America so we can start climbing," says Kroeger. "We've been doing this five years and have a good handle on it. Most of our songs have a nice rolling groove that gets the head nodding. We're not reinventing the wheel. We are a rock band writing songs that can stick in people's heads. That's the goal." —Alan Paul

AVOIDED Guitars (Kroeger) Paul Reed Smith; (Peake) Fender Telecaster Amps (both)
Mesa/Boogie Triple Rectifier Currently Listening To (Kroeger) Bob Marley—Legend;
(Peake) Sevendust—Home, Three Doors Down—The Better Life, Deftones—White
Pany All-Time Favorite Albamm (Kroeger) Big Wreck—In Loving Memory Of, Soul Coughing—El Oso, The
Beatles—Revolver, (Peake) Sting—Nothing Like the Sun, Blue Rodeo—Diamond Mine

NOURER



WITH INCUBUS' MIKE EINZIGER

Incubus' new release is

When Incubus Attacks, Vol. 1 (Epic/Immortal),
an EP containing rare, live and previously unreleased material.

Who or what inspired you to play guitar?

I was grooving to Van Halen when I was six. I tried to play then, but my hands were too small, and it hurt. So I played drums, flute and piano instead. Then, when I was 12, I was at a friend's house and I saw his older brother playing "Eruption." He was really good, and I thought it was the coolest thing I had ever seen. So I told my mom I had to have a guitar and, being totally cool, she went out and got me one the next week.

What was the first song you mastered?

Metallica's "Welcome Home (Sanitarium)."

What was your first gig?

Incubus is my first and only band. The first show we ever played was a "Sweet 16" birthday party in a friend's backyard. We totally sucked and we only had four songs. Our drummer got up and tried to run around the drum set during a break in the middle of a song, and he tripped and knocked over his whole kit. It was really embarrassing, especially because our friends had been telling everyone how great we were.

How about your best gig?

We've been able to play in front of some huge crowds on tours like the Ozzfest, which is cool, but we really love doing our own shows, even if it's only in front a few hundred people. Everyone's there to see you, and they know all the words. There's so much energy flowing, and it's all geared toward your music, which is really intense and gratifying. We've done a lot of great shows like that, but we did one just a few weeks ago that had an incredible vibe and left us buzzing for days.

What's the one piece of gear you couldn't live without?

My Paul Reed Smith archtop hollowbody. I don't know if I could go back to playing anything else. It's great for everything. I also really like my Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere pedal, and my Boss digital delay.

Your most recent full-length album, *Make Yourself*, has had a slow and steady rise.

pic/Immortal), or so we hope! We don't want to just be a flash in the pan, and we're not looking for hits—it's just nice to be respected and to be able to keep doing this and BY ALAN PAUL getting better.

ZEBRAHEAD

"PLAYMATE OF THE YEAR"



Long after the video for Zebrahead's song "Playmate of the Year" is over, it's the bodacious babes whose images stay in your head. But what keep ringing in your ears are the doofus yelps of "Woo!" and "Yeah!" that punctuate the tune's infectious chorus.

"Those were actually the first parts we wrote," says Justin Mauriello, the group's singer and guitarist. "I was surfing with our bassist, Ben [Osmundson], when out of the blue he said, 'We gotta write a song that goes "Woo! Yeah!" He kept hearing it in his head and thought it sounded hooky."

Thus are hit songs born. But "Playmate of the Year," the title track from Zebrahead's new Columbia album, didn't get its enticing name—the brainstorm of guitarist Greg Bergdorf—until much later.

"The first round of lyrics was about jerkin' off in the bathroom with a centerfold," says Bergdorf. "It just evolved from whackin' off to playmates. It was a logical progression."

Although Mauriello and his bandmates worried that Playboy Enterprises

would deny them the use of its titular appellation, the company was only too happy to oblige. In addition to delivering *Playboy's Y2K* Playmate of the Year, Jodi Ann Paterson, for the album's cover, it provided Paterson, the Playboy Mansion and a bevy of centerfold models for the video. As for Mauriello, he got to participate in a special R-rated version of the video that was shot for the Playboy Channel.

So, did the singer score at the Playboy Mansion?

Mauriello pauses. "Well, I scored with my girlfriend," he offers. "How's that?"

Woo! Yeah!

-Christopher Scapelliti

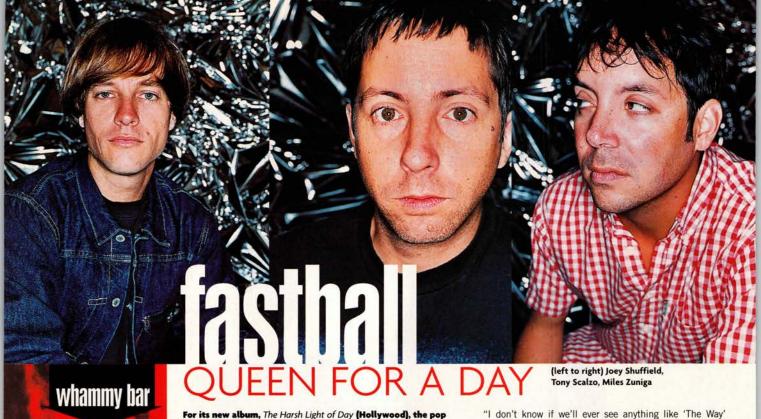
(Mauriello) Gibson Les Paul Custom and Flying V MPS (Bergdorf) Fender Tone-Master;

(Mauriello) Gibson Les Paul Custom and Flying V MPS (Bergdorf) Fender Tone-Master;

(Mauriello) Marshall | CM900 | CURRINTLY LISTINING TO (Bergdorf) Metallica—Kill

'Em All; Beethoven—Piano Sonatas; (Mauriello) Weezer ALL-TIME FAVORITE ALBUMS (Bergdorf) Pink Floyd—

The Walf | Mauriello) Van Halen—Van Halen



For its new album, The Harsh Light of Day (Hollywood), the pop trio Fastball has employed nothing less than a full orchestra, keyboards—even a Mariachi section. Says guitarist Miles Zuniga, "Our big risk is that there's some very bombastic and dramatic songs on this album and nobody named Freddie Mercury in the band."

With its lush production and instrumentation, *The Harsh Light of Day* may be the band's most fully realized album yet—certainly more so than the Austin group's second effort, the 1998 Platinum album *All the Pain Money Can Buy*. But Zuniga maintains that the bells and whistles were simply what the songs demanded.

"A lot of times we felt like these fuller approaches were the only clothes these songs could wear. They're busier and more challenging, but I think, pound for pound, the songs are better."

The million dollar question, of course, is whether Zuniga, singer/bassist Tony Scalzo and drummer Joey Shuffield have written anything as catchy as "The Way," Scalzo's alt-rock hit inspired by a news story about a missing elderly couple.

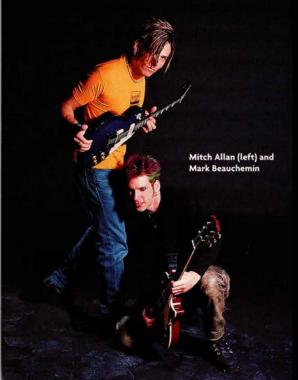
"I don't know if we'll ever see anything like 'The Way' again," admits Zuniga. "It was one of those songs with a life of its own."

Already, pop radio stations have picked up the new album's first single, "You're An Ocean." But even if it (or four other Harsh Light tunes the band considers single-worthy) never matches the success of Fastball's previous efforts, Zuniga says he'll still be looking at a bigger picture.

"Ben Harper has never had a huge hit, but he has a career. That's what we aspire to. We'd like to take the glamour and excitement of rock and turn it into a carpentry gig—something steady and reliable. If not, maybe a flamboyant singer with an operatic voice like Meat Loaf or Axl Rose will save us by covering one of these songs."

—Andy Langer

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"RIGHT NOW"

SR-71's "Right Now" is a lot like the parable of the blind men and the elephant—everyone that approaches it seems to hear something different. "For such a simple song, it's a little confusing," guitarist Mark Beauchemin says of the Baltimore band's ultra-catchy debut single, which is currently a hit on radio and on MTV's Total Request Live. "The choruses are pop and the verses are punk, but it's also kind of heavy metal. If somebody played the riff in the Eighties, it

would be seen as a metal riff."

Mitch Allan—SR-71's frontman and rhythm guitarist, and the songwriter behind "Right

Now"—says somebody did play the riff in the Eighties: Metallica. "I grew up knowing how to play the Kill 'Em All album start to finish, but I never wrote a song using my double-picking skills. So when I wrote this and used a double-pick riff, I went, 'Wow, it's so metal, but it has such a great pop sensibility.' "

Some of that pop sensibility is evident in

Beauchemin's mid-song solo, 15 seconds of raucous fun that he says is a tribute to C.C. Deville and Ace Frehley. But the bulk of the song's pop tendencies surely come from its witty chorus, a cowrite between Allan and the Marvelous 3's Butch Walker that declares, "I know she may not be Miss Right, but she'll do right now."

"Basically, I'm stringing my partner along because she's a great lay," says Allan. "It's an

anthem for short-term relation-

And while "Right Now" may be slightly faster and heavier than the bulk of SR-71's debut,

Now You See Inside (RCA), Allan says he sees the song as an excellent introduction to the group. "We fall in the middle of this market, where there's extremely heavy music on one side and extremely poppy music on the other. I don't know how you'd classify us or 'Right Now,' but it sure seems like a good place to be."

—Andy Langer

A Metal Odyssey

As far as the boys in Mudvayne are concerned, the 1968 sci-fi spic 2001, with its strong message of evolution, is a perfect model for their own thematic inclinations. They even open their major-label debut, L.D. 50 (Epic), with an abstract musical piece called "Monolith," named for the movie's gigantic, enigmatic, star attraction. "Music needs to constantly evolve to survive," says guitarist Gurrg (a.k.a. Greg Tribbett). "At the same time, it has the power to evolve others. And that's what we're trying to do with this band—push people beyond their boundaries."

L.D. 50 (executive produced by M. Shawn Crahan, also known as Slipknot's 6) elevates Mudvayne's brutish riffs and mangled vocals past standard metal fare, thanks to its funked-up bass groove, odd time signatures and far-out sonic special effects. While the sound might take a little getting used to, it's nonetheless harder than hell and addictive as crack. And lest you foolishly think that the band's look—currently defined by shock-rock makeup—is merely a scheme designed to draw in the unwary, think again: this is performance art, baby.

"Our ultimate goal is to make people feel like they're at a movie when they come to see us," says Gurrg. "The makeup isn't important—it's just what we're doing now with the finances available. But it'll all change. We want props for us to interact with onstage. We want theatrics, soundscapes and audience involvement. This is only the beginning."

ment. This is only the beginning."

And the ending? Who knows. But the band feels that the process of creation itself is half the trip—as long as the result engages the audience. "We feed off the audience's energy, and they feed off ours," says Gurrg. "It becomes a big ball of power, and you can't step into it unless you want to become part of it."

-Brian "Dad, My Hair Is Blue Again" Stillman



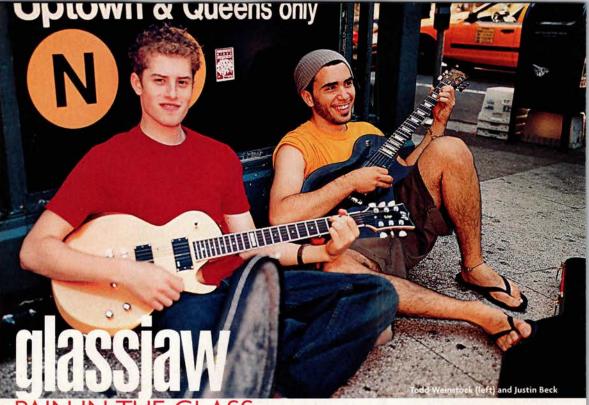
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whammy bar



Rush frontman/bassist Geddy Lee will release his first solo album on October 24. The album, which as of press time was still untitled, was co-produced by Lee and features former Soundgarden drummer Matt Cameron on 10 of the 11 tracks.

Can't get enough Stevie Ray Vaughan? Then check out The Essential Stevie Ray Vaughan, a new biography by Craig Hopkins that compiles a massive amount of information on the late, great guitarist's life and career. In addition to almost 30 pages of interviews with Vaughan, the book overflows with recollections of bandmates, friends and collaborators, while the encyclopedic volume's chronology and concert listing provides an almost daily record of Vaughan's life. The book can be ordered at www.srvfanclub.com, via the author at P.O. Box 2019, Cedar Hill. Texas 75106, or by emailing clhop@swbell.net. •



Sure, lots of heavy groups sing about pain and suffering, but in Glassjaw's case, it's genuine. You want pain? When lead singer Daryl Palumbo was 18, he was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease, an incurable, debilitating stomach illness. You want suffering? In the liner notes of the band's debut album, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Silence (I Am/Roadrunner), guitarist Justin Beck's "thank you" list ends with the plea, "I hope everyone from high school is dead."

"That's really the way I feel," says Beck. "The kids were rotten, and I was completely miserable there. I wouldn't mind if they all just died."

It's precisely this kind of flat-out, albeit mildly disturbing honesty that endeared Glassjaw to producer Ross Robinson, who signed the band to his I Am imprint after listening to a stack of demo tapes from more than 100 music acts. According to fellow guitarist Todd Weinstock, "After Ross heard our demo, he came down to see us play, and literally 15 seconds into the first song he got up and yelled, 'Stop! That's enough. You guys are signed.'

But while Robinson has made a name for himself forging the nu-metal sound with bands like Korn and Slipknot, the music of Glassjaw is considerably harder to categorize. It's sort of hardcore, but way too textured and melodic; it's sort of emo, but way too fucking heavy. The result is an album that builds in intensity and explodes in its inevitable climax-the title track-which chronicles the sickness that has taken over Palumbo's life.

"Daryl's health problems have become a part of this band," explains Beck. "It was apparent that 'Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Silence' had to go near the end of the album, because it's just so intense and so honest. After it's over. you really can't go on listening to the CD for too much longer.

-Richard Bienstock

ITARS (Les Paul Studio with EMG pickups, Fender TelecasterAMPS Peavey 5150, hot-rodded Marshall CURR LISTENING TO (Beck) Dillinger Escape Plan—Calculating Infinity, Charlie Hunter—Charlie Hunter (Weinstock) Radiohead—The Bends ALL-TIME FAVORITE ALBUMS (Beck) Bad Brains—Quickness, Anthrax—Among the Living; (Weinstock) Metallica—Master of Puppets



bv Vic Garbarini

Eddie Van Halen

The guitarist is currently working on a new Van Halen record, due for release next year.



SONG: You Light Up My Life

by Debby Boone The Best of Debby Boone (Curb, 1990)

"LeAnn Rimes covered this recently. But I've got go with the original. C'mon, it's by Pat Boone's daughter! I guess we're all trying to light up someone's life in some way. You can feel her sincerity, it's kinda moving. Before this song, the only Boone I liked was Boone's Farm strawberry wine-which is just a step up from Mad Dog."



(1981), by Stephen King (Signet)

"This is sort of the opposite of what I'm reading now, which is an inspiring book called The Teachings of the Buddha that I picked up in Japan. The Shining is kind of a semi-Exorcist tale about a

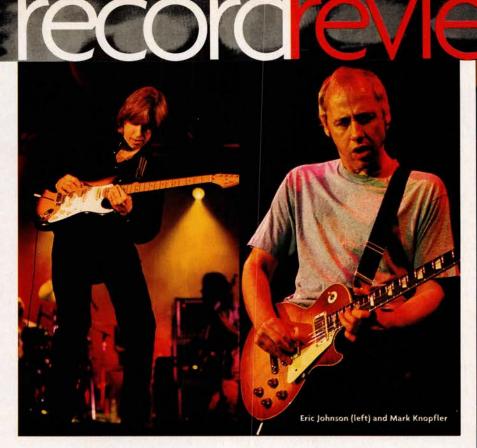
hotel that possesses the winter caretaker, played by Jack Nicholson in the movie. And you find out that all the previous caretakers were also possessed. Scared the hell out of me."



Pink Flamingos (1972), directed by John Waters

"The most disgusting, sickening film you've ever seen. It stars Divine, a female impersonator, who's competing against this other couple for the title of Filthiest Person on the Planet. And

Divine takes the cake. Well, not cake, exactly. Let's just say she gets into some grotesque shit. Literally. Turn somebody really conservative on to this movie-tell them it's a classic." [laughs]



Mark Knopfler

Sailing to Philadelphia (Warner Bros.)



Eric Johnson and Alien Love Child

Alive and Beyond (Favored Nations)



They hail from opposite sides of the Atlantic, but Mark Knopfler and Eric Johnson share a substantial amount of creative ground. Both are exacting per-

amount of creative ground. Both are exacting perfectionists with virtuoso chops and distinctive soloing styles, and both draw from a broad palette of influences that they delight in fusing together.

But for all their similarities, Knopfler and Johnson are decidedly different players, a point that their latest releases make particularly well. On his second solo outing, Sailing to Philadelphia, former Dire Straits leader Knopfler is the sultan of subtle, focusing on the songs and playing between the cracks, where the textures and moods allow him some space. Texas guitar hero Johnson is no stranger to subtleties, either, but his reputation has been staked on six-string fireworks, which he launches in abundance on the in-concert set Live and Beyond.

Not a standard-issue live album but a collection of new songs recorded during a three-night club stand before a partisan crowd in his home base of Austin, Texas, Live and Beyond captures Johnson and his band, Alien Love Child, in fine, explosive form. Johnson sets the evening's theme at the outset with a spacey intro that leads into the boogie grunge of "Zenland," a technique-flaunting instrumental filled with harmonics and distortion that comes off not unlike Dire Straits' "Money for Nothing." From here, Johnson and company turn in more than 11 minutes of electric blues strutting and further harmonic exploration in "Last House on the Block." "Shape I'm In" offers psychedelic rock flavors, while "Rain" is propelled by light, jazzy chordings. Storyville's Malford Milligan sits in on the aching, soul-oriented "Once a Part of Me" and the blues shuffle "Don't Cha Know." The latter song seems to stoke Johnson's performance on "The Boogie King," as he slides from biting 12-bar licks to tricky atmospherics and back again. In a similar vein, the album's lone studio track, the instrumental "World of Trouble," offers a bluesy ebb and flow between screaming pyrotechnics and gentle, hushed passages.

Knopfler's Sailing to Philadelphia is just as expansive, but with a more consistent temperament and a markedly tighter dynamic range. It's familiar ground for any Dire Straits fan, but in the best way possible. Here, Knopfler displays his knack for blending melodic sensibility with adventurous arrangements and instrumental colorings, as he occasionally deploys violin and trumpet amid his layered acoustic and electric guitars.

His helpers include longtime cohorts Guy Fletcher on guitar and Paul Franklin on pedal steel, as well as such high-profile guests as James Taylor ("Sailing to Philadelphia"), Squeeze's Glenn Tilbrook and Chris Difford ("Silvertown Blues") and a slightly over-emotive Van Morrison ("The Last Laugh"). Everybody follows Knopfler's lead by playing to the demands of this 13-song collection of broadly rustic and mostly low-key songs about small-town celebrations, mail-order brides, racism, junkies and vindication.

Knopfler blows his trademark amplified Chet Atkins-style picking through "What It Is," but Sailing to Philadelphia is, for the most part, a laid-back record. The songs unwind luxuriously, and Knopfler carefully chooses his moments to shine, inserting lyrical breaks into "Prairie Wedding," intertwining hide-and-seek licks between Jim Hoke's autoharp and harmonica on "Baloney Again" and riding with the pack on "Speedway to Nazareth" until he finds the perfect spot for a majestic solo near the song's end.

Neither Knopfler nor Johnson reach the peaks achieved on their previous albums, but on Sailing to Philadelphia and Alive and Beyond, they bolster their reputations as engaging players and tasteful songsmiths and show that growth doesn't necessarily have to be stultifying.

—Gary Graff

EDITOR'S PICKS

VAST

Music for People (Elektra) On Music for People, VAST mastermind Jon

Crosby trades in the gothic darkness of his 1998 debut for catchy, unabashedly grandiose arena rock. Though Crosby gets a little too cozy with his inner Spinal Tap at times, the former teen guitar prodigy is more interested in crafting "vast" soundscapes—mixing syncopated grunge riffs, exotic samples, strings and his faux-British accented, reverb-soaked vocals—than in unleashing his presumably formidable chops.

-Brian Hiatt



Tribal Tech

Rocket Science (Escapade/Tone Center)

This subversive fusion quartet continues to cultivate its jam-to-tape-and-shape-it-later aesthetic. Guitarist Scott Henderson pulls out all the stops here, alluding to Allan Holdsworth ("Saturn") and Stevie Ray Vaughan ("Moonshine") along the way, while unleashing a hellacious barrage of noise on the title track. He wails with grungy abandon on the slow, grooving organ jam "Mini Me," triggering fantasies of Jimi Hendrix jamming with Medeski, Martin & Wood. Few guitarists with this much technique also exercise this degree of imagination and daring in their music.

—Bill Milkowski



The Guess Who

Live at the Paramoun (Buddha)

The Guess Who proved time and time again that it could turn out hit songs. With this

1972 live set, the Canadian group demonstrated that it was a serious rock band as well. The newly remastered recording highlights the twin-guitar attack of Kurt Winter and Don McDougall, and the masterfully soulful vocals of Burton Cummings. Throughout the disc, the Guess Who plays loud, tough and hard, generating a heat as intense as anything created by Led Zeppelin, the Who, Humble Pie or any of the era's best bands. Set highlight: a stunning 17-minute version of "American Woman"

-Mordechai Kleidermacher



Scott Holt

Dark of the Night (EMC/Mystic Music)

The other guitarslinger in Buddy Guy's band for

the past decade, Scott Holt shows plenty of good taste and enviable connections on this outing. Guy guests on "Breakin' Up Somebody's Home," as does Jimi Hendrix's rhythm section (Mitch Mitchell, Billy Cox) and producer (Eddie Kramer), and the members of Stevie Ray Vaughan's Double Trouble. Holt's playing leans toward the fluid, creamy side of blues-rock, and his intriguing repertoire includes one original ("Dark of the Night") and a soulful reworking of the Clash's "Train in Vain." —Gary Graff



Little Feat

Hotcakes & Outtakes: 30 Years of Little Feat (Warner Archives/Rhino)

One of America's great cult bands, Little Feat has long offered the kind of idiosyncratic, pan-genre music you'd expect from a Zappacamp devotee such as founder and guiding light, the late Lowell George. Feat's facility

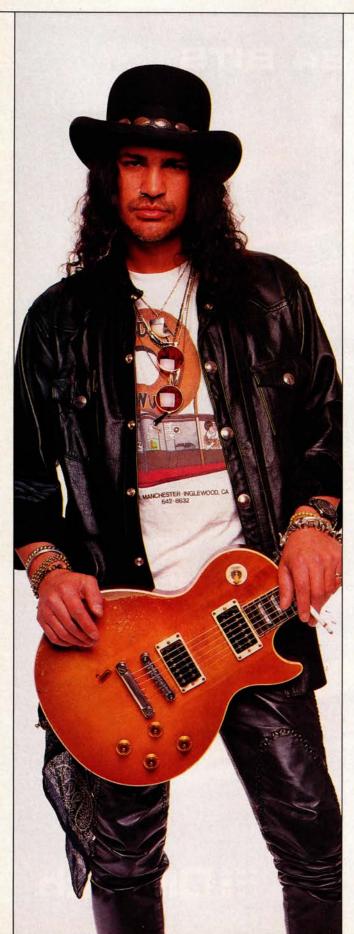
was and remains its ability to combine chicken-scratch licks, tricky jazz modals and down-home r&b grooves into a Dixie-flavored stew, a talent that is ably captured on this four-CD set (produced by group vets Paul Barrerre and Bill Payne), Hotcakes celebrates the ensemble's strength as much as it does George's particular genius, and proves that these Feats seldom fail.

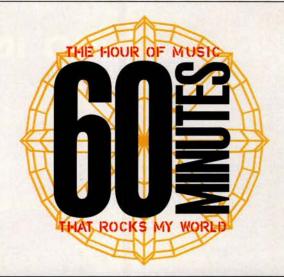
-Gary Graff

0-60 IN 24 BITS









SLASH

Slash has good reason to call his latest album with Snakepit Ain't Life Grand (Koch). After years of keeping a low profile, the former Guns N' Roses guitarist is glad to be back in the spotlight and once again enjoying his role as leader of his own band.

"When Guns started, it was basically us against the world," says Slash, "and that's what it feels like playing with Snakepit. I just had to find guys who were all musically on the same page. It's like everybody is into doing the same thing, and watching each other's back, sort of like a gang—just like early Guns."

Ain't Life Grand is a highly charged chunk of intense, post-punk hard rock that certainly carries forward a major slice of the GNR vibe. While this is the second Snakepit project and features an entirely new lineup, it feels like a new beginning for Slash. He says that the first album, 1995's It's Five O'Clock Somewhere, was "kind of a loose-knit, laid-back thing recorded in my home. But this is a real, full-time rock and roll band."

For Slash, taking the band on tour is a welcome baptism by fire. "We're jumping right into it by touring with AC/DC for a couple of months, and the album's due out in October." There's no talk of a GNR reunion, of course, but last year's terrific Guns N' Roses live album, *Live Era '87-'93*, did require that Slash and the reclusive Axl Rose work together again. Well, sort of.

"I never actually talked to AxI or even saw him during all that," admits Slash. "There'd have to be a lot of soul-searching and coming to terms with things before he and I could work in the same room. But the mix on the album was all wrong when I first heard it, so I jumped in to fix it. We sent the tapes back and forth to each other, and that was basically it."

As for what his ex-partner is up to, Slash is as curious as the rest of us. "I actually want him to finish that Guns N' Roses record so I can finally hear where the fuck everything was going when he shifted gears."

As for Rose's fascination with Nine Inch Nails-style electronica, Slash is still skeptical. "Axl's gone through a couple of phases where he's been taken in by someone. Look, I love Nine Inch Nails' The Fragile, and Pretty Hate Machine is a fuckin' amazing record—but I wouldn't want to make it."

Regarding his 60 Minutes choices, Slash says, "I'm kind of in a strange musical generation gap. I listen to everything from Charlie Christian to the Buena Vista Social Club. But I've been in a hard-rock mode lately, and a lot of where I come from as a guitarist is in these records."

BY VIC GARBARINI

"BRING IT ON HOME"

LED ZEPPELIN II

(ATLANTIC, 1969)

"Anybody who's ever heard me play can trace a direct line right back to Jimmy Page. This is where I got religious about carrying around a Les Paul and a Marshall. I've jammed on this song for years—it's so simple, yet so profoundly heavy. It starts with that slow, traditional boogie, and then suddenly those amazing riffs loom up and you're in new territory. That was my first introduction to the idea of focusing a song around a riff and developing the solo from there."

"ROUND AND ROUND"

AEROSMITH
TOYS IN THE ATTIC
(COLUMBIA, 1975)

n't up my alley as a player, but it was such an amazing, brilliant record. It's very eclectic and self-involved. It doesn't reach out to you—you have to go to it. This is self-centered, inward-turning stuff. But it's very genuine at the same time. They're really effects-conscious players, really into guitar electronics. There's incredible experimentation going on at every level. It's like Fripp and Belew are constantly saying to each other, 'Look what I discovered today!' "

"MACHINE GUN"

JIMI HENDRIX

LIVE AT THE FILLMORE EAST
(EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA, 1999)
"To me, this is the ultimate
Hendrix piece. I used to rewind
this tape and listen to it over and
over. I never tried to learn it, I just
let myself absorb it by osmosis.

played this for me, and I couldn't believe the intensity of it. We listened to this record constantly. But I never picked up on that whole whammy-bar, tapping school of playing. But the last time I saw Eddie [Van Halen], he really gave me some nice compliments on my solo in 'Paradise City.' Suddenly I realized that even though I never tried to imitate him, I do have a knack for going for the same kind of fast, fluid passages he does—which I obviously picked up from listening to Van Halen records."

"FREE MAN IN PARIS"

JONI MITCHELL

COURT AND SPARK

(REPRISE, 1974)

"I was raised on Joni Mitchell. Both my mom and dad worked with her—my dad did the layouts for her album covers. As a little kid, I was could handle and still be rock.
He's cruising and melodic, but
there's also a great sense of
urgency and aggression. And it's
all down to the incredible sensitivity and control he has over the
guitar with his fingers."

"MIDNIGHT RAMBLER"

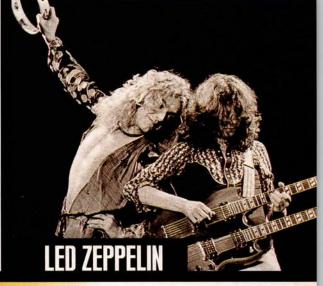
THE ROLLING STONES

GET YER YA-YA'S OUT

(ABKCO, 1970)

"I've always felt that Mick Taylor was just so underrated—almost nobody realizes how good he really is and what he added to the Stones. His slide work on this live album, his tone, the way he uses sustain, his choice of notes—it's all amazing. Jagger and Richards set up the vibe, and then Taylor comes along, picks up the feel and adds that extra fuckin' thing that just completes the puzzle perfectly."

Anybody who's ever heard me play can trace a direct line right back to Jimmy Page. This is where I got religious about carrying around a Les Paul and a Marshall.



"I just fell in love with this song's slow, bump-and-grind rhythm—it's about as close to John Bonham as you can get. Joe Perry's thick, oversaturated Les Paul sound really helped focus my direction on guitar. There's also a lot of funk in his playing that I picked up on. When I met him, I found that he'd listened to a lot of the same groove-oriented stuff I'd grown up on as a kid, from Sly Stone and Rufus to Stevie Wonder."

"ELEPHANT TALK"

KING CRIMSON

DISCIPLINE

(EG/CAROLINE 1981)

"God, I would love to meet Robert Fripp. When he and Adrian Belew came out with this, I knew it wasHendrix could just create directly, like there was no filter between his inspiration and the finished song. He was really good at not overinterpreting his feelings, soundwise. It's like he would say, "We're going to do "Crosstown Traffic" ' and it would just pour right through."

"YOU REALLY GOT ME"/ "ERUPTION"

VAN HALEN

VAN HALEN

(WARNER BROS., 1978)

"In junior high school [original Guns N' Roses drummer] Steven Adler and I would race our bikes and cut through the school fence so we could hang out and smoke pot and do chicks. One day he

in the studio when she made this album. To this day, I hold her as a huge inspiration as a guitarist, singer and songwriter. She has a voice that can express such a range of emotions—she can be very tough, but at the same time very vulnerable and softhearted. I saw her in a café the other day in Hollywood, and every time I look into her eyes, there's so much torture and drama going on in there."

"SHE'S A WOMAN"

JEFF BECK

BLOW BY BLOW

(EPIC, 1975)

"I learned this whole record backward and forward. I usually don't like guitar solo records, but this has all the nuances and subtleties I

"KIDS"

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT (EMD/CHRYSALIS, 1979)

"I'd like to give some credit to Michael Schenker, who I rarely mention. I first saw him at some all-day hippiefest. When UFO came on, we all jumped to our feet and went, 'Whoa!' Schenker had a raunchy yet very precise technique with a lot of bite to it. The way he handled his Flying V and wah-wah pedal inspired me to get a Flying V. He would do some great semi-classical-sounding melodic runs. I remember working out the opening to the killer guitar solo on the live version of this song. I owe him a lot."



"MESSIN' WITH THE KID"

RORY GALLAGHER

LIVE IN EUROPE

(CASTLE, 1996)

"Another phenomenal, underrated guy who I was awed to jam with a while back. He's a unique, Jeff Beck-style rocker—but Irish, and with a little more edge. He can start out with some straightahead boogie, like on this tune, and then launch into some amazing experimental riffing. I can hear some of his tone and bite in my own playing. If Hendrix is blue and Van Halen is red hot, then Rory is kind of...magenta." [laughs]

Pete Townshend's slammin', in-your-face, windmilling technique of rhythm playing floored me when I was a kid, and still does. He was a major influence on my intensely aggressive guitar attack.

"MANNISH BOY" MUDDY WATERS

THE CHESS BOX

(CHESS/MCA, 1989)

"There's all these box sets flying around, and if there's one I can listen to from top to bottom, it's this one. I just stop, slow down and listen to the fuckin' bare nakedness of his soul coming through. It's pure, raw emotion—this is what he's got to work with, and he's giving you the whole deal. If the raw essence of it touches something in your heart, then you've obviously found something you should keep exploring."

"WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN"

THE WHO

WHO'S NEXT

(MCA, 1971)

"This is an obvious choice, but it's simply brilliant. Pete Townshend's slammin', in-your-face, windmilling technique of rhythm playing floored me when I was a kid, and still does. He was a major influence on my intensely aggressive guitar attack. I've heard him do acoustic versions of this song on benefit albums, and even without the distortion and volume, it still gets across. And that's very humbling—to hear him go to the rawest form of an instrument and, with maybe even a string broken, still be able to realize his initial vision of a song as powerful as this."

classic rock albums revisited

ON THE RECORD



SKID ROW

SKID ROW

(Atlantic, 1989) Produced by Michael Wagener

In the late Eighties, if you were shopping for musical instruments at Garden State Music in Tom's River, New Jersey, you might have unwittingly heard the birth of Skid Row. It was there that guitarist Dave "the Snake" Sabo met bassist Rachel Bolan and guitarist Scotti Hill. In time, Sabo became the store's manager and put his newfound authority to good use.

"We would do quite a bit of writing in the store, trying out our ideas on the gear we were supposed to be selling," says Sabo. "It was an amazing time."

Eventually, the trio hooked up with singer Sebastian Bach and drummer Rob Affuso to form Skid Row, the group that probably best symbolized arena rock's last gasp before it succumbed to the power of grunge and alt rock. Released in January 1989, Skid Row, the group's multi-Platinum debut, went on to sell some five million copies, largely on the strength of three hit songs conceived in Garden State Music: the rebellious rock anthems "Youth Gone Wild" and "18 and Life," and the power ballad "I Remember You," a song that was responsible for draining the butane from tens of thousands of disposable lighters.

Says Sabo, "Our music wasn't that different from what other New Jersey bands were doing at the time. But we were lucky enough to be writing and playing a little better than most other groups, and I think we garnered a lot of attention as a result."

Among those paying heed were the members of Bon Jovi, fellow New Jerseyites who introduced Skid Row to managers Doc and Scott McGhee. After signing Skid Row to a deal with Atlantic Records, the McGhees squired the band away to Royal Recorders in the resort city of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where it recorded Skid Row with producer Michael Wagener.

As the group soon discovered, the McGhees' choice of the studio was based on more than its great sound quality.

"They told us, 'We need to get you out of New Jersey and go where there are no distractions,' " says Sabo. "But the real reason they chose it was that there were two beautiful golf courses on the studio grounds. Those guys wanted to play golf!" he says, laughing. "The studio just happened to be there as well."

Skid Row and its crew had their share of fun

on the course, tooling around recklessly in golf carts, and Doc McGhee would periodically drive the band's 12-passenger van around the grounds. There were also plenty of concerts to catch at the nearby Alpine Valley amphitheater.

But the fun and games were simply a reprieve from the hard work of crafting an album. First and foremost, the group and Wagener wanted to translate the punch of Skid Row's club shows onto tape. "Everyone was really focused on making a great record," says Sabo. "There were no egos, no nothing. Whenever a band cuts its first record, there's a kind of innocence to the whole process. It wasn't until our record became successful that everyone's ego came forward."

Skid Row's members knew they were toting hitmaking goods to Wisconsin, thanks to all the songwriting work done in New Jersey. Prior to being recorded for the album, "Youth Gone Wild" existed in another form, with a different set of lyrics. "Somebody suggested to us, 'Why don't you write about the shit you guys have gone through to get where you're at?" says Sabo. "We were like, 'Wow! What a great idea. Duh!" "The song was subsequently rewritten.

"18 and Life" was based on the Vietnam experiences of Sabo's older brother, Rick, from which the guitarist created a fictitious story. And according to Sabo, "I Remember You" almost didn't make the album because he and Bolan thought it might be too soft for the group's repertoire. "But when Scott, Doc and Sebastian heard it, they were like, 'If you guys don't do this song, you're out of your minds.' It was one of those cases where we were so close to it that we couldn't see what we had."

Sabo recalls that the last song recorded for *Skid Row* was "Tornado." As it happens, the song was aptly named: as the band laid down the track, a twister tore through Lake Geneva, taking out everything in its path. "We were playing the song's riff, and this tornado came through the grounds and knocked out the power," says Sabo, who, along with Bolan and Hill, is today part of the reactivated Skid Row. "Luckily, we got the track down before the power went out. But it was really scary. There was a huge window in the studio, and we could see this 'thing' approaching as we jammed. We were thinking, Oh, man, this could be the last piece of recorded music we ever make."

-Gary Graff

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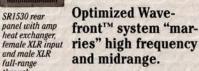
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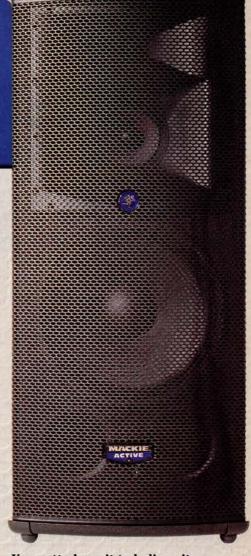
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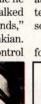
An all-star lineup of modern rockers join forces to pay tribute to their fallen comrade, Snot frontman James Lynn Strait. by Chris Gill

James Lynn Strait probably would have felt singers who appear on the album have flown in rently plays with Soulfly. "After I left Lynn's pissed off that a group of singers from today's leading alternative metal bands have gathered at a Los Angeles photo studio to pay tribute to him. He would have been aggravated to discover everyone in such good spirits-hugging each other, chugging beers together and erupting into hearty laughter as they exchange stories. But Strait wouldn't have been upset by the display of affection; he just would have been angry that he couldn't be there to take part in the festivities himself.

Strait, the lead singer for the Santa Barbara, California, band Snot, had an uncanny knack for bringing people together while he was alive. "From the second that Lynn walked out onstage, he had everyone in his hands," says System of a Down vocalist Serj Tankian. "He knew how to feed off the crowd and control

them, turning them into this unified mass. He had the crowd in the palm of his hand from beginning to end."

Even in the afterlife, Strait continues to be a unifying force. Few musicians could have inspired a tribute like Strait Up (Immortal/Virgin), which features vocal performances by 11 of Strait's closest friends, including Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst, Korn's Jonathan Davis, Soulfly's Max Cavalera, Slipknot's Corey Taylor and Sugar Ray's Mark McGrath. Most of the



1

5



from various parts of the world, taking time out from their touring schedules to participate in an eventful photo session and share their feelings about Lynn with the press.

James Lynn Strait was killed in an automobile accident on December 11, 1998, when his Ford Tempo crashed into a truck as he was exiting the freeway near Carpinteria, California, a town south of his Santa Barbara home. [see End Page, page 206] The accident occurred while Snot was in the middle of recording its second album, the follow-up to its Geffen debut, Get Some. The band had written about eight songs, but Strait had not yet written lyrics or melodies for the songs. Those songs became the basis for Strait Up.

"We didn't want to let those songs die," says former Snot guitarist Mikey Doling, who cur-

funeral, I felt really empty. I didn't want to just forget about him and move on. Tumor [Snot bassist John Fahnestock] and I came up with the idea of doing a tribute album where we would ask friends of the band to sing in Lynn's place. Everybody jumped right on it."

While Soulfly was in Australia to open for Korn at the Big Day Out festival, Doling mentioned his idea to Immortal Records owner Happy Walters, "Mikey told me that he wanted to do this record," says Walters. "I told him that I was down with the idea and that I'd put it out. Mikey and Tumor deserve a lot of credit for bringing this together. Everyone who is on the record was close to Lynn, and they did it for the right reasons."

"The biggest challenge was deciding whether to make the record or not," says

Doling. "I fought with myself over whether it was the right thing to do. I didn't want to make things worse and pour salt in the wounds. But then I realized it would probably enlighten people to who Lynn was."



Even though most of the songs were written well before the project was conceived, the band had no problem finding the appropriate singer for each song. "Every song seemed like it was meant for the singer that we picked to record it," says Doling. "We literally did-

1. Dez Fafara (Coal Chamber) 2. Mark McGrath (Sugar Ray) 3. Jason Sears (RKL) 4. Jahred Paulo Gomez (a.k.a. M.C.U.D.) ([hed]pe) 5.Max Cavalera (Soulfly) 6.Brandon Boyd (Incubus) 7. Seri Tankian (System of a Down) 8. John Fahnestock (Snot/Amen) 9. Mikey Doling (Snot/Soulfly) 10. Jonathan Davis (Korn) 11. Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit) 12. Corey Taylor (a.k.a. 8) (Slipknot) 13. LaJon Witherspoon (Sevendust)



n't have to make any decisions. It was as if everything was just meant to be."

The band gave the guest singers a great amount of freedom, allowing them to write their own lyrics in tribute to Lynn. "Performing on this album was a weighty challenge," says Incubus singer Brandon Boyd. "I'd never done a tribute to a friend who's passed on before. I thought a lot about Lynn while I was writing my lyrics, which are an argument for the existence of the soul. Lynn may be physically gone, but he left behind an immense influence on the people he touched with his ideas, music and art. His influence immortalizes him."

To the general public, Strait may be best known for his rather controversial antics. During an Ozzfest performance in Mansfield, Massachusetts, Strait was arrested for indecent exposure after he appeared onstage naked during Limp Bizkit's set and engaged in oral sex with a dominatrix. Strait also allowed himself to be videotaped having sex for Matt Zane's Backstage Sluts video series.

These episodes and many similar stories remain vital elements of Strait's legend, but those closest to him saw a compassionate side to his personality. Most of the contributors to Strait Up decided to focus on those attributes. "Lynn had this hard exterior, but he had teddy bears inside him," says Sugar Ray's Mark McGrath. "He would do anything for you. From the first time that I met him we were like brothers."

"Lynn had a childish personality," says Max Cavalera. "When I first met him, he was scared to come on our tour bus, and when he finally came in he was really quiet. I wanted to make him feel at home, so I asked if he wanted to sing a song with Soulfly onstage. He thought the idea was killer, so I had him do a cover of the Beastie Boys' 'Time for Livin'.' He really wanted to sing 'Bleed,' from our first album, so he bugged me about it for a week. I finally let him do it, and he changed the lyrics from 'I got my pride, that's all I need' to 'I got my weed, that's all I need.' Afterwards, we explained to him that 'Bleed' is a really serious song about murder. He held his head down, said he was sorry and that he'd never do that again. It was beautiful how honest he waslike a big kid."

"Lynn always held true to his beliefs," says Jason Sears of Rich Kids on LSD (RKL). "He did everything his own way. You don't find too many people like that anymore. If someone offers you a paycheck, your morals and values go right down the tubes, and you'll do whatever they want. Lynn would never do that."

While recording their contributions to Strait Up, many of the singers said that they could feel Strait's presence in the room with them. Several joke that Lynn is even there at the photo shoot, orchestrating the event and making sure everything runs smoothly. "I really felt like Lynn was in the studio with us," says Coal Chamber's Dez Fafara. "Before we started recording, we drank a bottle of wine,

smoked some weed and started channeling Lynn. The lyrics came right out immediately and I did the song in a couple of hours off the top of my head. I felt like he was helping me the whole time."

"Lynn completely penetrated my being," says Tankian. "I felt his presence within the first minute I met him, and I still feel it now. His eyes really captured me, because they were beautiful and spiritual. When he looked at you, he said hello to your soul, not your physical body."

While the profits generated by Strait Up will help support Strait's family and Snot's remaining members, the main purpose for recording the album was to ensure that Strait remains in the thoughts and memories of fans who may have never gotten the chance to know him. Strait touched many lives during his brief 30 years on earth and, as the growing ranks of Snot fans that are still discovering the band testify, he continues to affect people.

"Getting this record together was an incredible healing process for the band, his friends and the fans," says Lynn's mother, Marie Ann Strait. "He had so many friends in this business because he was a musician's musician. He was always supporting other bands, and he respected other musicians as much as they respected him. I'm proud that Lynn was able to finally realize his dream. And I'm sure he'd be proud to see all of the great musicians who turned out to pay tribute to him on this record."



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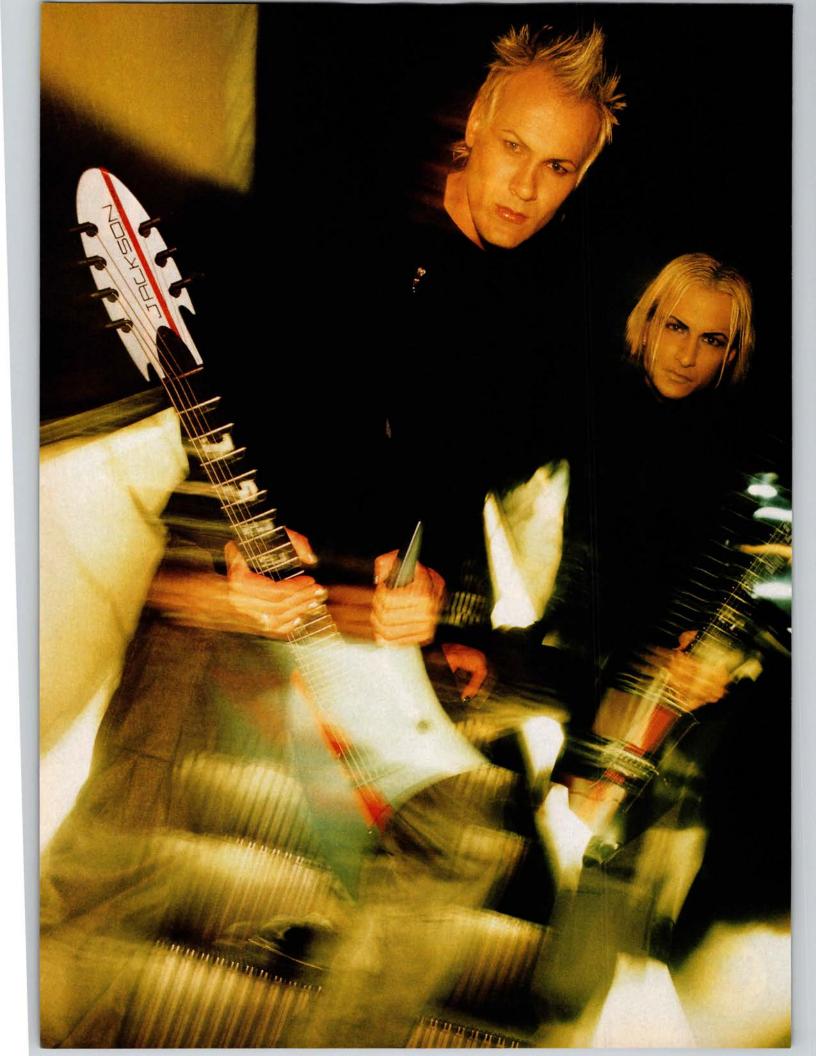
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TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM
BORING GUITAR SOUNDS.
ON THE GROUP'S NEW SCI-FI
EPIC, VAPOR TRANSMISSION,
THEY EMERGE VICTORIOUS.

BY CHRISTOPHER SCAPELLITI

Rock and rollers have always

been comfortable—a little too comfortable, perhapschanneling creative inspiration from outer space. Back in the late Sixties, Jimi Hendrix became rock music's first afronaut, writing trippy, sci-fi-tinged songs, like "Third Stone from the Sun," "Castles Made of Sand" and "1983 (A Merman I Should Be)." As Ziggy Stardust, David Bowie impersonated a silversheathed alien rocker on a mission to save the world from self-destruction. Even Elton John sang about being a "Rocket Man" (although, in all likelihood, rock's most infamous tail gunner wasn't referring to spaceships).

But when it comes to rock and roll spacemen, Orgy appears to be the real deal.



GREG WATERMANN

The group seemed to come out of nowhere in 1998, claiming the opening spot on Korn's Family Values tour and taking control of radio airwaves with its synth-guitar-saturated cover of New Order's 1983 hit "Blue Monday." Orgy's otherworldly outfits and android boytoy appearance certainly helped the five-member group look the part of body snatchers come to stake their claim in the hard-rock terrain. By the summer of 1999, the band was asserting its dominance, as "Blue Monday" climbed the *Billboard* charts, followed by Orgy's self-penned song "Stitches." Soon after, the band's debut album, *Candyass* (Elementree), was certified Platinum.

Not bad for a group that had been together only six months before making its first rock and dance music. But whereas Candyass was created by a band still trying to find its identity, Vapor Transmission benefits from the group's two years together on the road and in the studio. The songs are tighter, the performances more aggressive and the sounds—particularly the synth-guitar tones invoked by lead guitarist Amir Derakh—more out of this world than ever.

"With this album, we wanted to combine what we learned from doing the first record with what we learned from being a band a little longer and touring," says the laconic Derakh. "It wasn't that we had changed our sound drastically, but we wanted to take advantage of the experience and knowledge we've gained over these past two years. The first

The public at large, however, might not be as convinced. Despite the Platinum sales of *Candyass*, many remember Orgy only for "Blue Monday," the hit song the group didn't write. It's a snipe Orgy answered to repeatedly on its last tour. But Shuck says the band members felt they had nothing to prove with the making of *Vapor Transmission*.

"We were pretty happy with the success of 'Blue Monday.' It didn't bum us out that our big hit song was a cover. With the new record, we really just wanted to kick ass. And in that respect, yeah, we hope this record will smash our last effort. We want to annihilate the last thing we did, because I think we always want to improve."

"Fiction (Dreams in Digital)," Vapor

Transmission's first single, is a fair representation of Orgy's latest plan for world dominance. Written by the band with their producer, Josh Abraham, the song sounds like what you might have heard in the early Eighties had Duran Duran teamed up with the Psychedelic Furs. A fantasy about the nocturnal habits of a virtual-reality girl, "Fiction" is pure Orgy: a meld of Eighties influences executed with new-metal aggression and transmitted on a wave of pure theater. In fact, theatricality is perhaps the defining element in Orgy's music. Unlike nearly everything else in the pop music realm, the group's music is grandiosely evocative. As it happens-and as in all things concerning Orgy-there is good reason for this.

"Everything we write is composed in a make-believe world," explains Shuck. "We have a futuristic, alien land that we visualize when we sit down to write, or

even when we speak about Orgy and how we fit into the scheme of things. That's where a lot of the imagery in our songs comes from, and it's how we come up with ideas for our clothes and everything else."

RYAN

SHUCK

(LEFT)

DERAKH

AND

AMIR

However startling the group's overnight success may be, what's truly surprising is that five musicians with such eccentrically likeminded sensibilities ever met in the first place. In reality, Orgy's members knew each other years before the group formed. Derakh, vocalist Jay Gordon and drummer Bobby Hewitt had met in the late Eighties and played in a band together in the mid Nineties. Gordon has known bassist Paige Haley since childhood,

"WE LIKE
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THAT."
--AMIR DERAKH

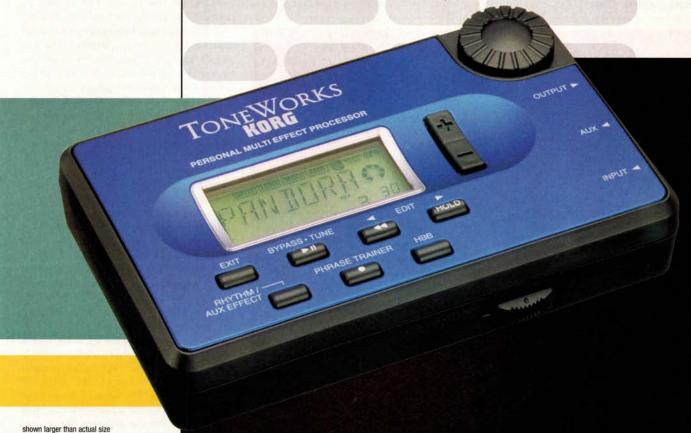
album. But while Orgy's critics grumbled that its mach-speed ascent was part of an industry conspiracy—the L.A.-based band is managed by the company that handles Korn and Limp Bizkit, among others, and Orgy was the first act signed to Korn's Elementree label—the group's fans had apparently seen rock's future and named it "Orgymania."

They'll have little reason to call it anything else when Orgy releases its second album, *Vapor Transmission* (Elementree), this October. Like its predecessor, the new album finds Orgy glomming the glammest elements of techno, new wave and metal to form a bridge between guitar-based hard

record was a bit more of an experiment, whereas this time we had our technique down."

Offers Ryan Shuck, Orgy's irrepressible, hyperactive second guitarist, "I think that our attitude on the first record was, 'This is new, we hope you guys like it and don't think it sucks.' This time it's like, 'Hi. We're back and we're loud. See how loud we are?' We went in the studio with that vibe. We were like, 'Okay, we're just off the road and we're pissed off. We know what we sound like now. We're not afraid of writing really heavy songs, and we're not afraid of writing complicated songs. We know we can do it. And we know who we are."

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and hooked up with guitarist Shuck in the mid Nineties. More recently, Gordon and Derakh worked together producing and engineering Coal Chamber's 1997 debut.

"It was probably inevitable that we would all form a band together," says Shuck. "I mean, when I first met Jay, we were just amazed to find someone else who had similar ideas about music. And when he introduced me to Amir and the other guys, we were all so in sync with each other. It was wild."

The band members didn't share just a taste for high-fashion clothes, makeup and science fiction movies; each of them was also fed up with the L.A. music scene's follow-the-leader attitude. Says Shuck, "We thought,

God, every band right now sounds like Korn, and before that every band sounded like Alice in Chains and Nirvana. And everybody's wearing baggy clothes and baseball caps.

"And we said, 'Fuck it! Let's not give up the things that are of interest to us. Let's be as heavy as we want to be, but let's not be afraid of pop and heavy metal.' That's why Amir uses guitar synths, and why I use all my pedals and effects. The goal of this band is to create its own sound, and our guitars are a huge part of that."

In that respect, Orgy benefits from the contrary natures of its guitarists. At 27, Shuck is the eager neophyte, whose imagination is freed by not knowing the limitations of

his instrument. Derakh, at 36, is the older, accomplished master with the know-how to turn Shuck's pipe dreams into reality. "Amir's helped me because he's more experienced and he has a degree in audio engineering," says Shuck. "I'll come to him with a sound I want to create, and he'll know how to do it. I'm, like, nine times more knowledgeable about sound and equipment since working with him. And I know he gets off on my energy and my conceptualism. He's said to me, 'I don't know where you come up with some of this stuff. You're worse than my kid.'"

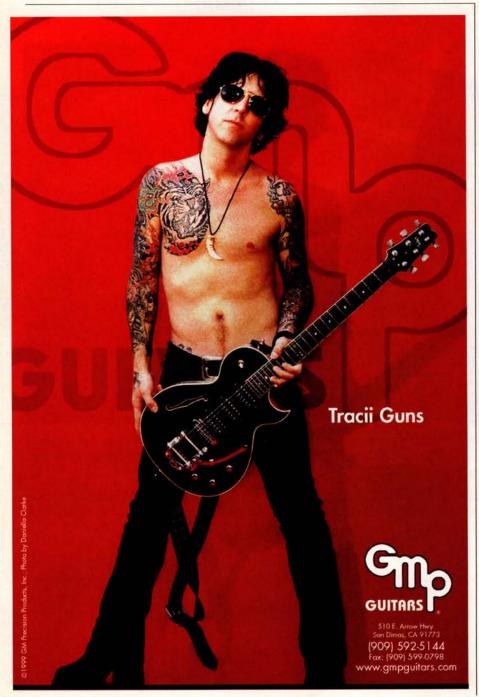
Although he didn't play in a band until he was in high school, in a way Shuck was working on his career well before he reached his teens. Lacking any distinct artistic inclinations, he was drawn to music, in particular heavy metal, largely for its dramatic trappings. "I was kind of manic and hyperactive when I was a kid. I was always writing these elaborate stories with my Star Wars action figures and creating sound-tracks for them with my albums. When I was probably nine or 10, I used to dress up like Kiss every day. I would really get into trouble for that, too. I used to have to go over to my friend's house to do it."

Shuck's nascent creativity was in great part driven by his need to escape the stifling confines of his hometown, a small, culturally isolated community near Bakersfield, California. "I was born in a shit town, and I lived there until I was 18," he says. "We didn't get MTV until two years after everyone. The best that could happen to you in that town was getting a job out in the oil fields, because you'd make like 15 bucks an hour. That was, like, rich! You could get a nice house."

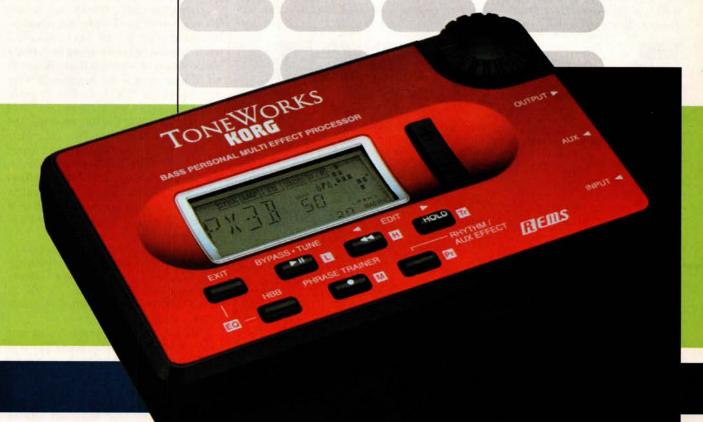
His imagination fueled by comic books, Shuck eventually developed his creative abilities-not to mention his entrepreneurial skills-through drawing. "At school I became known as 'The Artist.' I drew naked ladies, and the kids would give me their lunch money for the pictures. 'Cause, you know, I'd only get two bucks a day for lunch. Me and my friends would go to McDonald's, but all I could afford was a cheeseburger and fries. That's not enough for a kid! So I started drawing pictures of naked chicks for my friends, and that's how I'd get my extra buck or two so I could get a 'Number 3.' " He laughs. "Ridiculous, huh? I was a fuckin' idiot. The burgeoning businessman!

"So I was gonna do that for a living. Then I discovered the guitar."

At 16, Shuck picked up the instrument, he concedes, "just to get girls. Art wasn't really helping me score the chicks." With a few chords under his belt, Shuck formed a band with his boyhood pal Jonathan Davis called Sex Art. The friendship would prove valuable to both teenagers: Together, they wrote "Blind," the song that became the first hit for Davis' current band, Korn. Years



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later, Davis returned the favor by introducing Shuck to his friend Jay Gordon, thus paving the way for Orgy.

"When Jay and I met, we discovered there were other people like us," says Shuck. "That's when I started to realize that I could pursue my dreams. But even then, it was really hard to see beyond my upbringing. I still have that small-town mindset: I want to break out of the box. I still wake up hyperactive every afternoon."

For all of Shuck's impetuosity, Amir Derakh is reassuringly cool and self-possessed. Whereas Shuck still comes off as the wide-eyed kid who can't believe he's making records, Derakh functions closer to the ground, and with good reason: he has the benefit of years of experience as a professional musician, having played guitar in the mid-Eighties hair-metal band Rough Cutt.

"That was a great experience," says Derakh, who played a traditional six-string guitar in the group. "But had it lasted much longer it would have been a little suffocating. I mean, there's just so much you can do with straight guitar. In that respect, I find my work with guitar synths much more stimulating and challenging."

Derakh didn't become interested in music until he was a teenager. When he did, it was the synthesizer, not the guitar, that held the San Diego native's interest. "I was completely fascinated by it," he recalls. "All those buttons and switches and sliders." Derakh might have turned out to be a latterday Keith Emerson had his cousin, a classically trained pianist, not bought a synth first. Rather than compete, Derakh picked up the guitar. "I got my first guitar when I was 16 but didn't start playing until I was 18. I took some lessons from a guy who taught me nothing but scales. And I hated it, because he wasn't teaching me any songs. So I ended up teaching myself things like AC/DC, and all these rock songs. I figured them out pretty quickly, and it came really naturally to me."

Within two years, Derakh had become known as one of San Diego's best guitarists. The Rough Cutt gig got him to L.A., and when the band folded, he stayed on, forming a band with Jay Gordon and Bobby Hewitt. It was around this time that he began dabbling in guitar synths. "I'd been collecting guitar synths ever since I was in Rough Cutt," says Derakh. "I just liked how they allow me to be a synth player even though I'm a guitarist."

When that group folded, Gordon began working with Shuck, writing songs and cutting demos. As it became obvious to them that their material had potential, Gordon called upon Derakh and Hewitt to join their sessions, bringing in his friend bassist Paige Haley to round out the group.

Within months, Orgy was ensconced in a ski chalet near Lake Tahoe, recording *Candyass*. Shortly after the album's release, the group found itself playing the Family Values tour, honing its act before thousands of fans each night.

"We played a whole Family Values tour not knowing if people were gonna like us or not," says Shuck. "There we were, playing next to bands like Korn and Limp Bizkit, who were causing an earthquake every time they played. And what we found is that we're a heavy band. We didn't know that until we went out on the road and got a chance to play on a tour with heavy bands."

Once the tour ended, Orgy immediately went into production mode, eager to put the energy of the road into its new record. Although Vapor Transmission was mixed and mastered in L.A. studios, the group recorded the basic tracks with Josh Abraham in Hollywood-area homes using Orgy's newly acquired mobile hard-disk recording studio. "We recorded in three different houses," says Derakh. "The first one we shared with Korn for a month while they were making their new record. The bulk of the recording was done in a really big house in the Hollywood Hills, where we all lived for three months. And then some of the last parts was recorded at Jay's home studio."

The hard-disk studio is critical to Orgy's music, as it plays a major role in the group's writing process. For example, "Dramatica,"





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one of the first songs written for the new album, was driven by a rhythm Gordon dreamed up, with the group layering its parts over his drum pattern. In another instance, guitar parts were digitally chopped up and processed, thereby producing sounds that resulted in new songs. "Some of the songs were created just from somebody being in the studio and making something up and the rest of us adding to it," says Derakh. "There are songs that we started based simply on vocals or a sound. It depends on who's around at the time."

Derakh explains that the *Vapor Transmission* song "107" began life as a series of unusual tones he created on his guitar synth. "I had these wild sounds and I was anxious to use them. Generally, that's what starts me off: I'll program a sound that will get me to start playing something. I had, like, four or five new guitar-synth sounds, and that's what we used to create '107."

Nearly every guitar Derakh owns has some sort of synth in it. For the making of *Vapor Transmission*, he employed his numerous vintage guitar synths—including a rare GR-700—as well as some newer Roland units. "I'm just trying to create a sound that's different. I can get good regular guitar tone, but what I try to do is find something that has the attack and the edge you'd expect from a guitar, along with an overtone

that's sort of lurking in the background."

For amps, Derakh relies on his stash of Marshalls, although for the making of *Vapor Transmission* he also used amps by Roland and Line 6, as well as a Yamaha modeling amp. "I'm actually working with Yamaha to create a new version of that," he says. "It'll have a new look, and I've modeled a couple of tones I created into it."

For live performance, Derakh plans to enhance his rig with a Roland D-Beam light-sensing controller that allows notes and effects to be manipulated via hand movements. "I'll be able to control different sounds with it just by the way I move my body."

Compared to Derakh's setup, Shuck's rig seems downright spartan. The heart of it is his Ibanez Universe seven-string and a Marshall JCM800 with a modified gain control. "It's a distortion modification that lets me control my tone just by raising and lowering my volume," he says. "If I want a clean sound, I just turn down."

In addition to his seven-string, Shuck played a custom Jackson seven-string on Vapor Transmission, as well as Schecter Celloblasters, five-string baritone guitars tuned in fifths (high to low: A E B F# C#). Says Shuck, "I play them for the same reason I picked up the seven-string: I don't get inspired by technical know-how, I get inspired by a different toy. We had a lot of fun

with the Celloblasters on this record. No one knew what to do with them, and I was saying, 'These are dope. We'll have fun with them.'"

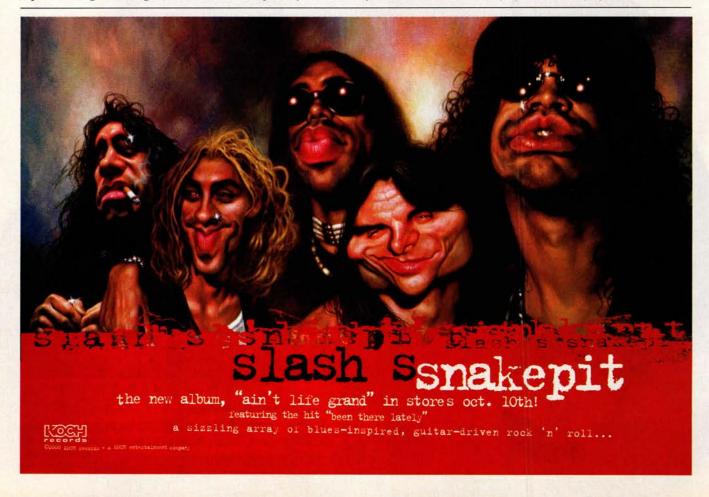
In addition, Shuck used a slew of Boss stompboxes, an Ibanez Tone-Lok PH7 phaser pedal and Line 6 DL4 Delay Modeler and MM4 Modulation Modeler pedals.

While the unusual guitar tones and part and parcel of Orgy's distinct sound, Shuck and Derakh stress that it's not a case of art for art's sake. In the meticulously groomed world of Orgy, every bleep and blip has a purpose, fitting into a complex matrix that defines the band's place in the modern-rock universe.

"We like being a rock band," says Derakh, "but we don't want to sound like everybody else. It's a fine line we have to walk to accomplish that."

Should Vapor Transmission bring the group success of a more widespread nature, Orgy imitators—so far nonexistent—are likely to start popping up everywhere, like the creatures from Invasion of the Body Snatchers. But according to Derakh, no one in Orgy is worried.

"We always ride the technology. We just stay right on the edge of the latest innovations and put them to work for us. That's why there's no telling how even our next record will sound. It's going to depend on the technology that's available to us. And that's always gonna be changing."



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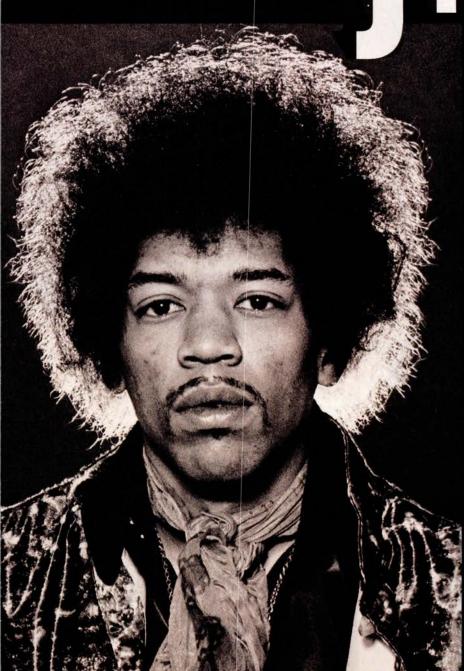
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A few month's ago, *Guitar World* conducted a readers survey in which, among other things, we asked for song transcription ideas. As expected, the top 10 requests were dominated by tunes composed by the current crop of metal superstars. But there were two significant exceptions: wedged in between the Korns and the Metallicas of the world were a couple of songs by the late, great Jimi Hendrix—"Little Wing" and "Purple Haze" (both transcribed in this special issue).

What is it about Hendrix that inspires such continued devotion three decades after his death? On the 30th anniversary of his passing, we decided to answer that very question. With the help of several formidable Hendrix experts and the much appreciated cooperation of the Hendrix family, *Guitar World* attempts to unravel the enigma that is Jimi Hendrix.

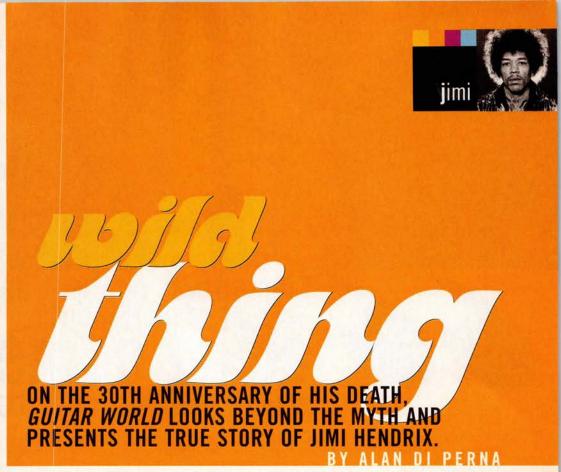
Over the following pages, you'll find an action-packed biography full of fresh insights by legendary guitarists that knew the electric gypsy personally, a comprehensive discography and videography, an exclusive interview with Jimi's favorite drummer, Mitch Mitchell, and a rather ingenious piece of fiction speculating on what Jimi might have been like had he survived his 1970 drug overdose.

As Jimi once asked, "Are you experienced?" If not, you will be after reading the following.

58 WILD THING 67 BOX SET & DISCOGRAPHY 71 BACK TO GITCHA 77 MITCH MITCHELL



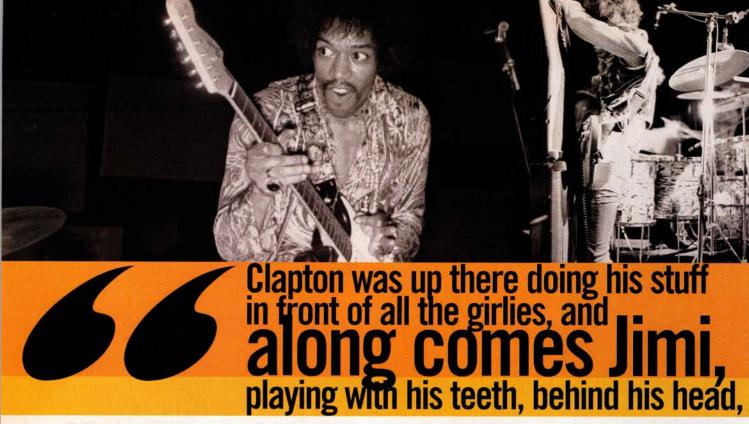






f all the great Sixties guitar icons—Beck, Clapton, Page, Townshend—Jimi Hendrix is by far the most enigmatic. His career as a rock star lasted a scant four years, cut short prematurely by his death 30 years ago at age 27. In his time, he was notoriously reticent in front of interviewers' microphones—the king of the trippy non sequitur. Put it down to a consciousness radically altered by psychedelic drugs, the caution of a black man in a white world or the natural inclination of a highly accomplished musician to say it all through his music, Hendrix liked to leave people guessing.

The passing years have only served to obscure "the real Jimi" even further. Several generations of revisionists—from well-meaning rock historians to self-serving opportunists—have had their way with his life story and musical legacy. The historical process has inevitably reduced Hendrix to something of a caricature. Like much that belongs to rock's rich and raunchy history, poor Jimi's been Disneyfied. A complex artist has been reduced to a dumbed-down, one-dimensional image. The highly marketable Jimi icon (big old Afro and upside-down Strat) has taken its place alongside the Marilyn icon (skirt whooshing skyward) and Elvis icon (pompadour and sneer) on the wall mural of the ersatz malt shop called commercialized nostalgia.



To Disneyfy an artist is to divorce him from his historical context. In the case of a musician, this means separating his music from the meanings, emotional perspectives and critical implications it held for its original audience, so as to make it remarketable to subsequent listeners. And in Hendrix's case, present-day listeners are often bobbing devout heads to music that was completely unknown to Jimi's original audience. During his lifetime, Hendrix only released three studio albums and one live disc. (He was at work on a fourth studio record at the time of his death.) But there have been hundreds upon hundreds of posthumous, unofficial and downright illegal releases bearing his name, likeness and-presumably-some of his guitar playing.

That's quite a bit of material to wade through. And quite frankly, some of it is crap. While revisionist iconographers have attempted to cast Hendrix as some kind of wizard, deity or clairvoyant spaceman, he did play bum notes and uninspired drivel at times, just like any



other guitarist. So the first step in finding the real Jimi Hendrix is learning to distinguish the music he specifically created for album release from all the marginalia that's out there. To cultivate a real understanding and appreciation of Hendrix, it's essential to view him in the context of his times. In sound, style and spirit, Hendrix was quintessentially

a guitar player of the Sixties, a time when rock music was undergoing what many consider its greatest creative burst.

...By Any Other Hame

HE CELEBRATED PSYCHOLOGIST JACQUES LACAN THOUGHT THAT we all undergo a primordial identity crisis in early life when our parents confer a name on us. What to make, then, of the child christened Johnny Allen Hendrix on December 7, 1942 and renamed James Marshall Hendrix some four years later? Perhaps this was what lay at the root of the reticence, playful verbal evasiveness and seemingly fluid sense of identity possessed by the man who went on to find fame under the name Jimi Hendrix.

Contrary to what some would have you believe, Jimi didn't come from outer space. He came from Seattle. Growing up there, James Marshall Hendrix quickly discovered an affinity for the guitar. Being left-handed, he took to stringing conventional guitars upside down and playing them that way. Among his strongest early guitar influ-

ences were bluesmen like Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Elmore James and Buddy Guy. His resemblance to the latter is uncanny at times. And Guy remembers being approached by Hendrix at a club date one evening during the Sixties.

"Jimi said, 'Can I tape what you're playing?' " Guy recalls. "And I said yeah. Somebody had a portable tape recorder on 'em and Hendrix got down on his knees and just stayed there at the corner of the stage. So Jimi gave birth to something that originally came from Buddy Guy. And I know if Jimi was here, he'd be the first one to tell you that."

Hendrix started playing semi-professionally while still in high school. After a year in the Army Airborne Division-he was honorably discharged after being injured on his 26th parachute jump-the guitarist embarked on a journeyman career as an r&b sideman on what was then known as the Chitlin Circuit—small, predominantly Afro-American clubs throughout the South. He changed names once again. As Jimmy James, he backed such r&b notables as Sam Cooke, Solomon Burke, Hank Ballard, B.B. King, Jackie Wilson, Wilson Pickett and Ike & Tina Turner. Hendrix would later remember this period as a time of poverty, struggle and constant ripoffs. But it was also a tremendous musical education—one that extended to the recording studio, where Hendrix cut some minor sides with a number of artists, including r&b greats the Isley Brothers (then just at the start of their career) and Little Richard (then on a downslide from his mid-Fifties burst of glory as one of rock and roll's boldest originators). Completists might want to collect these recordings, but they're pretty much just anonymous session work.

By 1966, Hendrix had landed in New York City's age-old bohemian neighborhood, Greenwich Village, where folk music and rock were intersecting in a big way. He was fronting his own group, Jimmy James and the Blue Flames. By this point, his act had begun to include stage tricks, like playing the guitar behind his head, a move he'd appropriated from bluesman T-Bone Walker. But during that same period, Hendrix also recorded and performed with aspiring soul singer Curtis Knight—a situation that would later lead him into legal and contractual hassles of major proportions. Like name changes, litigation was a constant in Jimi's life. After Hendrix hit it big in 1967, some of the Curtis Knight recordings were issued under the titles Get That Feeling and Flashing. By that point, these albums had become something of an embarrassment to Hendrix, who'd already changed his style considerably.



who sits in and upsets the whole apple cart — doing almost circus tricks with the guitar. —JEFF BECK



Swinging London

by former Animals bassist Chas Chandler, who'd decided to try his hand at artist management. In September 1966, Chandler relocated Hendrix to London. Legend has it that the guitarist decided to rechristen himself Jimi Hendrix during the plane ride over, giving the everyday name Jimmy an exotic new spelling. Shortly after arriving in London, Chandler and Hendrix began auditioning sidemen for a new group to be centered around Hendrix's vocal and guitar work. They opted for the power-trio lineup that was being popularized at the time by Eric Clapton's then-new band, Cream. British drummer Mitch Mitchell—a veteran of Georgie Fame and his Blue Flames—was recruited into Hendrix's band. The bass slot was awarded to another Englishman, session guitarist Noel Redding. The new group quickly set about taking Swinging London by storm.

In late 1966, San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury scene was still a few months away from breaking out worldwide. And things moved so fast in the late Sixties that a few months were like a few years on today's rock scene. So London was the undisputed capital of the pop culture universe. Rock musicians, visual artists, fashion designers and models partied all day and all of the night with British aristocrats and gangsters. It was in this highly charged, intensely creative atmosphere that the Jimi Hendrix Experience exploded. They adopted Swinging London's freewheeling attitude along with its look—billowing shirts with elaborate ruffles and boldly colored frock coats in the "electric dandy" style popularized by Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones.

The Hendrix Experience also adopted the sound of Swinging London—the highly amplified, feedback drenched guitar style that was then being pioneered by Clapton, the Who's Pete Townshend and then-Yardbirds Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page. Townshend had been incorporating feedback into the Who's music since 1964, and had developed an assertively violent form of performing on the guitar that culminated in smashing the instrument to shards at the end of each set. It was Townshend who had worked closely with London music shop proprietor Jim Marshall to develop the first 100-watt Marshall amp head and speaker cabinet stack. He'd played a similar role developing the Hiwatt amp with Dave Hill. And sure enough, shortly after arriving in London, Jimi Hendrix paid a call on Pete Townshend.

"The first time I met Jimi, the Who were recording at IBC [Studios]," Townshend recalls. "Chas Chandler brought him in to



meet me, and Jimi was covered from head to foot in dust. He looked like he'd just come out of what we call a 'skip' in London—where you put builders' rubbish. He was very, very scruffy, and his military jacket

had obviously seen better days. His skin was bad. He was very pale. He was immediately nervous and shy and couldn't speak. He didn't speak. I just put my hand out and said, 'I've heard a lot about you.' 'Cause he'd been signed to our label. [The Experience were signed to the Who's Track Records in the U.K.—GW Ed.] And Chas said, 'Jimi wants to know what kind of rig to buy.' And I said, 'Well, you catch me at a strange time, 'cause I'm just shifting from Marshall to Sound City [which later became Hiwatt—GW Ed.] and at the moment I'm using both.' Chas said, 'Well that's what we'll do too.'

"A couple of days later," Townshend continues, "the Who and the Jimi Hendrix Experience appeared together at the Saville Theater, which was owned by the Beatles' manager, Brian Epstein. I think it was the first rock concert to play there. Jimi opened for us. And he had exactly the same rig as me—the same amplifiers in the same kind of arrangement. And I actually felt like I'd given too much away."

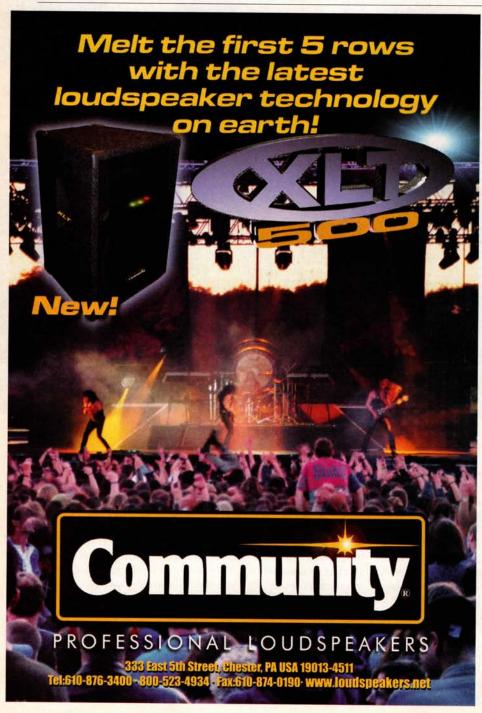
One of the most ill-informed and ubiquitous platitudes about Hendrix is that he was "so ahead of his time." In fact, few musicians were ever more completely of their time than Jimi Hendrix. And that doesn't detract in the least from his accomplishments. Mozart borrowed liberally from Haydn and J.C. Bach; he worked completely in the musical idioms of his day, but that doesn't make him any less a genius. In fact, the more you learn about the composers and music of Mozart's time, the more you appreciate what was utterly unique about him. And so it is with Jimi Hendrix. In fact, one reason why he seems the quintessential rock icon to many fans is that his work incorporated nearly all the major stylistic elements that went into the making of rock music during the classic Fifties and Sixties period.

Hendrix had first-hand involvement in r&b, blues, folk and post-British Invasion English rock. His ears took it all in. And while he appropriated plenty from his contemporaries, he also brought his own arrestingly original tonal and melodic sensibility to what he'd learned from these influences.

When he hit London, Hendrix was even playing the same kind of guitar that Pete Townshend was using at the time-a Fender Strat. But by reversing the strings on a conventional right-handed Strat, Hendrix altered the physics of the instrument. The heavier gauge low strings were now interacting with pickup pole pieces intended as transducers for the high strings-and vice versa. This imparted unique sustain characteristics that Hendrix incorporated into his overall approach. His playing style was less chordal than Townshend's, more reliant on single-note riffs. But the riffs he played tended to have the singing cadences of vocal lines, as opposed to, say, the bluesy bursts of Clapton's guitar solos from the same period. In this regard. Hendrix is actually closer to Beck than Clapton or Townshend, to whom he is more frequently compared. And while Hendrix is generally thought of as the king of heavily distorted, loud guitar, he also employed clean tones of striking subtlety and beauty. In the recording studio, he would become one of the first great architects of guitar arrangements. masterfully overdubbing watery textures colored by wah-wah and other effects to occupy precise slots in the sonic spectrum.

Onstage, Hendrix's act was clearly indebted to Townshend. But he brought a whole new dimension to that as well—in a word, sex. With his pelvis thrusting and his tongue going like some non-stop cunnilingus machine, Hendrix's every stage gesture was more explicit than merely suggestive. At one moment, his guitar was a phallus. Next moment it was his lover, whom he eagerly bestrode. Back when he was playing the Chitlin Circuit, Hendrix had obviously paid close attention while backing sexcharged performers like Little Richard and Tina Turner.

No wonder all the English guitarists felt threatened. Jeff Beck remembers seeing



Hendrix sit in with Eric Clapton during a gig at the London School of Economics: "Eric was up there doing his stuff in front of all the girlies, and along comes Jimi, who sits in and upsets the whole apple cart—playing with his teeth, behind his head, doing almost circus tricks with the guitar. Even if it was crap—which it wasn't—it got to the press. People wanted that. They were just starved for theater and outrage. I figured, Alright, that's it for me. None of us realized that someone was going to come along and whip the carpet out from under us in quite such a radical way."

Everyone in London's rock pantheon—from the Beatles and Stones downward—paid court to Hendrix at those early shows. They were surprised to find a quiet, almost painfully shy person at the heart of all the hoopla.

"He would never raise his voice above a whisper," says Beck. "It was all in his facial expressions and his hands: unbelievable comedy and profound statements just by the raising of an eyebrow. The guy

was on a big-time roll. He'd come from being a low-keyed sideman for Little Richard. Can you imagine the poverty and God knows what else? And suddenly he was recognized and whisked all over England in the wake of the Beatles and Stones, who were still active then. All of a sudden, he's on every radio and every TV show, turning out unbelievable singles and pissing all over everybody. He must have felt like Jack the Lad. And he was!"

Ilre You Experienced

N THE MIDST OF THIS METEORIC RISE, the Jimi Hendrix Experience began recording the singles and other tracks that would make up its debut album, Are You Experienced. The first of these was "Hey Joe," a Billy Roberts composition that had already been covered by the Byrds, the Leaves and the Standells. These versions were fairly well known to serious rock fans at the time, although Hendrix preferred a less familiar recording of the song by Tim Rose. "Hey Joe" was part of the standard garage band repertoire of the day, as were several other songs performed live by the early Experience, including "Wild Thing," which had been a hit for the Troggs, and "Gloria," which had been taken to the top of the charts by Van Morrison's band Them and by American one-hit wonders the Shadows of Knight. Like many garage bands of the day, the Hendrix Experience even took on Bob Dylan's epic hit single "Like a Rolling Stone."

As always, though, Hendrix brought his own sensibilities to these covers. Taking Tim Rose's cue, he performed "Hey Joe" at a slower tempo than most other bands, weaving in a graceful guitar/bass unison line and glints of six-string sparkle. Work on that track actually began while the Experience was still hunting for a record deal. It was the first of Hendrix's many collaborations with his longtime engineer and eventual co-producer, Eddie Kramer.

"When we were recording this, we had no money," Kramer says of "Hey Joe." "Chas at one point sold his bass or put it in hock or something to get some money to record. They tried this track a few times. I have a hilarious outtake of this. It's the first time Jimi actually sang it. He was reading the words and cursing and laughing."

Working during downtime at several London studios, including De Lane Lea, CBS, Pye and Regent Sound, the Hendrix Experience also cut "Hey Joe's" B-side, "Stone Free," and completed rough tracks for its second single "Purple Haze"/"51st Anniversary." ("Purple Haze" would become the lead track for the *Are You Experienced* album.)

On securing a record deal, the group moved over to Olympic Studios, where Kramer was a staff engineer. Olympic was then the hottest new studio in Britain's capital and would soon become home to the Rolling Stones, Traffic and other members of Swinging London's pop aristocracy, not least among whom was the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

"Once we got into Olympic, Jimi really got a chance to stretch out," says Kramer. "The sounds became deeper."





When it was first released in May 1967, Are You Experienced was hailed as one of the most important debuts of the year. The Experience seemed to arrive simultaneously with psychedelia. By this time, the San

Francisco hippie scene had broken out worldwide. In America, teenagers and college-age kids were growing their hair long, affecting a looser, more colorful way of dressing and engaging seriously with Eastern spirituality, radical politics, pacifism, free love and what were regarded as mind-expanding drugs, such as marijuana and a substance at the time relatively new to the American public called LSD.

Are You Experienced was embraced as an ideal soundtrack to all these activities. "You'll never hear surf music again," Jimi's sloweddown voice pronounces on the album's big instrumental track, "Third Stone from the Sun"—a public service announcement that rock music had left its "teenage entertainment" phase and embarked on a new era of greater emotional depth and serious musicality. The cover art for Are You Experienced featured a solarized photo of Jimi, Noel and Mitch decked out in their best Swinging London finery and viewed through a fisheye lens, which at the time was a stock representation of one visual phenomenon peculiar to the LSD experience. For those who didn't get the point, the slightly cheesy back-cover copy advised that the album would "put listeners' heads into some novel positions," and that "You hear with new ears after being Experienced."

"Purple Haze" was greeted as a hymn to lysergic transcendence and became the name for one highly popular variety of acid. The album's track, with its trippy backward tape effects, seemed to describe the transformational effects of dropping acid. "Not necessarily stoned," Hendrix intones, "but beautiful." It was all a little more heavy-handed than the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band—released that same year and also regarded as a big LSD album—but nobody seemed to mind.

In fact, that was just the point. The Experience came on heavier than San Francisco bands like the Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead and Quicksilver Messenger Service, heavier than folk rockers like the Byrds and Buffalo Springfield. Heavier than anyone, in fact. Which gave it a kind of instant accessibility that those other bands didn't quite possess. This was true proto-metal. And the Experience, along with Cream, was at its vanguard.

Other big tracks from *Are You Experienced*, including "Fire" and "The Wind Cries Mary," show that Hendrix was still very close to his r&b roots. A huge part of Hendrix's appeal at the time stemmed from the fact that he was arguably the first black musician to present himself in a completely white rock context. The American Civil Rights movement of the mid Sixties was generally applauded by the freethinking, white, middle-class hippie youths who formed Hendrix's first audience. But there was still a long way to go in terms of the races actually coming together. Most white kids still listened to r&b songs in cover versions by white performers. Emboldened by collecting Stones, Animals or Young Rascals records, a few adventurous Caucasians crossed the color line into real r&b. But it really was a different culture. The shiny suits and tight horn arrangements favored by many r&b artists just seemed old-fashioned to a lot of white hippie kids. Hendrix, however, blew away all these boundaries.

A few years earlier, the Paul Butterfield Blues Band had made its mark as the first racially integrated blues group. But it was a relatively underground phenomenon compared to the Jimi Hendrix Experience. And it wasn't about sex. There's no denying that Hendrix's early persona and stage shows tapped deeply into white culture's fascination with and fear of the black man's storied sexual prowess. "Purple Haze" is punctuated with vocal "oohs and aahs" that sound like they'd been lifted from a low-budget porn soundtrack. Another Experienced classic, "Foxey Lady," sports Hendrix's

continued on page 96



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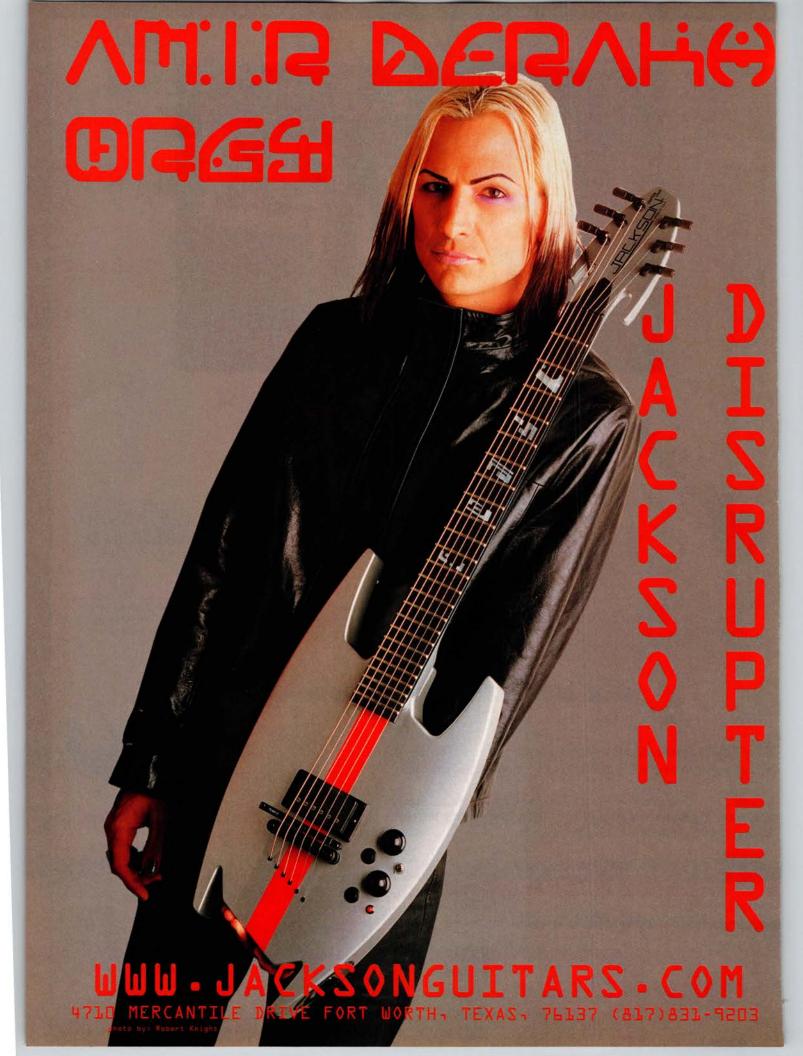
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After three years of burning the midnight lamp, the Hendrix family releases The Jimi Hendrix Experience, an ambitious four-CD set of hot rockin' rarities and exotic otherworldly delights. John McDermott and co-producer Eddie Kramer are in a jubilant mood as they sit down to discuss The Jimi Hendrix Experience, the monster four-CD (eight-LP) set recently released as a commemorative to the 30th anniversary of Jimi's passing in 1970. And why shouldn't they be? The fruits of their labor represents yet another triumph in a long line of thoughtful Hendrix BY ANDY ALEDORT

ROCK ME, BABY!

A complete guide to Jimi Hendrix's album and video catalog.

BY ANDY ALEDORT



Listed below is the complete "official" catalog of Jimi Hendrix releases currently available. Unofficial releases—unauthorized studio compilations and live bootlegs which continue to be produced all over the world—number in the hundreds.

ARF VAIL EXDERIFACED

ORIGINAL U.S. RELEASE DATE: Aug. 23, 1967 (REPRISE)

REISSUE DATE: 1997 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

The mother lode-this is where it all begins. Are You Experienced well deserves its recognition as the greatest debut in rock history. Setting new standards in virtually every category of guitar playing, song construction, musical style and innovative recording techniques, the 24-year-old Hendrix offers three-minute masterpieces such as "Purple Haze," "Foxey Lady," "The Wind Cries Mary," "Fire" and "Manic Depression" alongside more adventurous forays like "I Don't Live Today," "Are You Experienced" (which features the never-before-heard technique of combining forward and backward tracks of an entire band) and the unearthly "Third Stone from the Sun," the latter of which reveals such disparate musical influences as r&b, blues, Indian raga. jazz (traditional, modal and avant-garde) and musique concrete.

AXIS: BOLD AS LOVE

ORIGINAL U.S. RELEASE DATE: JAN. 10, 1968 (REPRISE)

REISSUE DATE: 1997 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

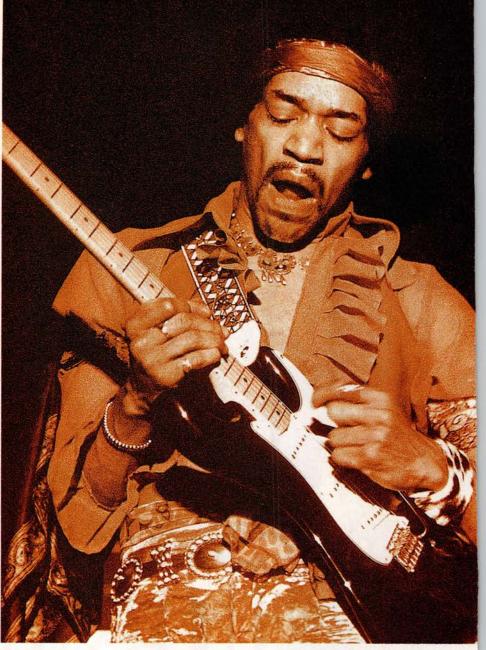
With the explosive success of Are You Experienced, the Jimi Hendrix Experience now compilations commissioned by Jimi's family.

"These live and studio recordings showcase Jimi Hendrix's amazing growth as an innovative musician and composer," explains producer John McDermott. "Jimi recorded constantly, and this set offers evidence that new musical ideas just *poured* from him."

This beautifully annotated box spans Hendrix's entire career, and, at more than four hours in length, is certainly the most ambitious, wide-ranging collection of Hendrix music ever released. It features 56 rare and previously unreleased studio, live and home recordings, drawn from sources which, until very recently, were unavailable. The accompanying 80-page, full-color booklet includes an essay by Dave Marsh, extensive track notes from McDermott, rare and never-before-published photos of Jimi, and reproductions of Jimi's original handwritten lyrics.

"Our overall intention was to look at Jimi Hendrix's four-year career, from 1966 through 1970, and move chronologically through the four CDs," says McDermott. "Thematically, the idea was to begin with the earliest recordings that we knew of, which are the live recordings of the Experience in Paris in October 1966. Disc 1 features 'Killing Floor' and 'Hey Joe' from that historic Olympic Theater show, which was the Experience's fourth live performance ever. The set wraps up on Disc 4 with two songs, 'All Along the Watchtower' and 'In from the Storm,' from Jimi's August 1970 performance at the Isle of Wight-one of the last live performances he ever gave-and culminates with "Slow Blues," his very last studio multi-track recording, from August 20, 1970 at Electric Lady Studios.

"We also look at this set as a complement to all of the other studio and live records that are currently available. From my perspective, as a fan, I felt that the core records, the ones that Hendrix himself had made, had to be brought up to spec. Once those big things were taken care of, we thought, Okay, let's get a little more ambitious here. My goal



with this box was to present the listener with a chance to hear things that offer a new appreciation and understanding of Jimi. This box set offers a fuller perspective on songs like 'Purple Haze,' 'Spanish Castle Magic,' 'Freedom' and many others."

For more details and insight on this landmark set, *Guitar World* grilled Kramer (who was also Jimi's lifelong engineer) and McDermott in an exclusive interview.

GUITAR WORLD What was the genesis of this particular box set?

EDDIE KRAMER Over the last three years that [co-producer] Janie [Hendrix], John and I have been in the studio going through tapes, we'd often come across something and look at each other and say, "Box set!" We kept track of those things, either mixed them or put them away. Then, once the mother lode of stuff was found, it balanced the whole thing out, and we knew we had it.

GW What "mother lode" are you referring to?

JOHN McDERMOTT We discovered 66 multitrack Hendrix tapes that had been sitting at Shaggy Dog Studios in Massachusetts for years. It was an incredible find. The story goes like this: in 1974, when Alan Douglas became the producer of Hendrix material for Warner Bros., he took all of the multi-track tapes to Shaggy Dog and made "work tapes;" that is, he edited specific tracks from the original reels and made compilation reels. Ultimately, the bill for studio time was not paid, and Shaggy Dog held onto 66 of these tapes. This material was recorded in eight-, 12- and 16-track format. Some examples of this material are found on Disc 4, such as the stunning versions of "Freedom," "Lover Man" and "Astro Man."

Also, Chas Chandler, the producer of Are You Experienced, Axis: Bold As Love and portions of Electric Ladyland, had in his possession the original half-inch four-track tapes from those albums, including the wonderful-sounding original tapes from Olympic Studios. When the family regained control of the catalog, discussions to release those tapes started. Sadly, Chas passed away before he could see these tracks released.

GW South Saturn Delta, which contained many previously unreleased and rare tracks, was sort of a precursor to this much more expansive set. Any particular reason for releasing so much of this material now, in such a big package?

McDERMOTT A lot of fans had been clamoring for things that had only been on In the West, War Heroes and Rainbow Bridge, which are all out of print. [see sidebar] With this box set, we're re-releasing many of those tracks, and we're also saying, "Here's stuff that even the rabid fans have never heard; what do you think?" This material sketches in the Hendrix legacy a little bit more and

gives people the chance to get into great music never before released.

GW Does each disc have a theme?

McDERMOTT The beauty of this four-CD set is that each disc does present a specific focus. Disc 1 is '66 through June '67 and the Monterey Pop Festival, which is an appropriate cut-off point for the first part of Jimi's career. Everything changed for Jimi after Monterey. Disc 2 is really about Jimi's progression from Axis: Bold as Love into Electric Ladyland, as Chas and Jimi reached the peak of their relationship, and then Jimi continued on without Chas. At the end of that disc, you've got the live-in-thestudio extravaganza "Gloria" and the intricate, deeply layered studio version of "The Star Spangled Banner," originally released on Rainbow Bridge.

Disc 3 is a bunch of different things from '69, but in particular it represents the peak of the Experience in a live situation, with the Albert Hall tracks from February 24, 1969, and the burning rehearsal tracks recorded a few days earlier.

KRAMER The rehearsal takes of "Spanish Castle Magic" and "Hear My Train A'Comin' " are tremendous. The word I'd use to describe them is *muscular*. These are seriously hairy performances.

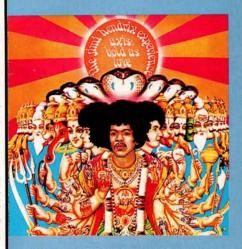
GW That Albert Hall show is generally regarded as the best live show the Experience ever played, represented here by "Little Wing" [transcribed in this issue] and "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)," both of which were originally issued on In the West.

McDERMOTT In the West was one of my favorite Hendrix albums when I was young, but, for a variety of reasons, we knew we weren't going to re-issue it. By the way, "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Johnny B. Goode," recorded on May 30, 1970 at the Berkeley Community Theater and originally released on In the West, are included on Disc 4 of this set.

Disc 3 ends appropriately with the Woodstock lineup, which Jimi dubbed Gypsy Sun and Rainbows, because it represents Jimi's still-forming evolution into the next, final phase of his career. Disc 4 begins with the Band of Gypsys lineup of Billy Cox and Buddy Miles, which closes out '69 and moves into '70, and represents the jumping-off point into Jimi's renewed energies through '70. So, overall, we tried to break up Jimi's career into four specific segments.

KRAMER We strongly feel that this release is the definitive box set, not only for the reasons John stated—that the box clearly illustrates the growth of Jimi's musicality over a four-year period—but, to me, it's exciting because you get to hear the "behind-the-scenes" stuff, like a take that immediately preceded the master take.

A perfect example is "Bold As Love" on Disc 2. That track is just killer. It's layer continued on page 112



enjoyed the privilege of a real recording budget, and the results were staggering. Axis: Bold as Love reveals Jimi's rapidly advancing creative powers, realized via the state-of-the-art equipment at London's Olympic Studios. Recorded virtually in its entirety in October 1967, only two months after the U.S. release of Are You Experienced, Axis: Bold As Love shows Jimi's expansive musical sensibilities sharply focused into 13 tracks, most of which clock in at three minutes or less. "Little Wing" remains one of rock's most well-known and best-loved songs. Other gems include the jazzy "Up from the Skies," the rock tour-de-force "Spanish Castle Magic" (featuring an overdubbed Jimi on eightstring bass), the beautiful "Castles Made of Sand" and "One Rainy Wish." But Jimi saved the best for last: the closing track, "Bold as Love," is as singularly unique an artistic statement as any ever recorded, and features an outro guitar solo of massive depth, power and intensity.

ELECTRIC LADYLAND

ORIGINAL U.S. RELEASE DATE:

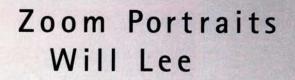
OCT. 16, 1968 (REPRISE)

REISSUE DATE: 1997 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

Electric Ladyland is widely regarded as the apex of Jimi Hendrix's musical creativity within the confines of the studio environment and is regarded by many to be the greatest rock album of all.

Jimi and his right-hand-man, engineer Eddie Kramer, continued to experiment freely in the studio, utilizing innovative recording techniques such as flanging, vari-speed, half- and double-speed tracking and backward tracking. A prime example of these techniques used in conjunction is "Have You Ever Been (To Electric Ladyland)," for which Jimi recorded an exquisite backward lead guitar track on top of psychedelicized r&b rhythm guitar.

Other stellar moments are abundant:
"Burning of the Midnight Lamp" floats with an
eerie, otherworldly beauty; "House Burning
Down" reveals Jimi's growing socio-political concerns, as he addresses the turmoil of a black
community rocked by such events as the Watts
riots and the assassination of Martin Luther
King ("try to learn instead of burn, hear what I



Band: CBS Orchestra, Fab Faux, Hiram Bullock. First instrument: My mother's ribs, then drums.

First band: Played drums in "Chances R" (2 guitarists, no bass).

Main musical influence: My Dad.

Music I'm currently listening to: Old stuff: Beatles & Stevie

Wonder. New stuff: Ivan Lins & Allison Kraus.

Favorite drummer: Ones that G-R-U-V.

Most memorable concert: Johnny & Edgar Winter at a

festival in Florida.

Musical advice: Find the Funk & don't let go.

Why I dig the Zoom 506 MKII: It's packed with fun—you can take it anywhere and it's got some cool amp EFX.



Zoom 506 MKII

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In a Guitar World *exclusive*, the reclusive 58-year-old Jimi Hendrix reflects on his three-decade career in music.

CHARLES SHAAR

An interview with Jimi Hendrix is, in itself, a

major event. Now 58 years old, the one-time "wild man of rock" rarely leaves his Hawaiian retreat, where he lives with his second wife and seven children, composing film scores and electronic blues symphonies in what is probably the best-equipped home studio in the world, and transmitting his work via the internet.

Following his narrow escape from death after an accidental barbiturate overdose in 1970. Hendrix released the classic First Rays of the New Rising Sun, which remained in the Top 50 for almost two years, before retreating from the hard-rock wars. He maintained homes and studios in Manhattan and London-where he opened the second Electric Lady studio in 1972forging firm and lasting friendships and musical collaborations with Miles Davis and Stevie Wonder, recording and jamming with a floating pool of musicians, including Mitch Mitchell and Billy Cox, without forming another permanent band. He performed memorably with Wonder in 1972 on both Music of Mu Mind and Talking Book, and with Miles a year later on On the Corner, but released nothing new under his own name for over five years. Black Gold was the eagerly awaited follow-up to First Rays, but with disco on the rise and punk waiting in the wings, the grandiose concept album received a frostily baffled critical reception.

However, the unexpected breakout of the "Rainbow Warrior" hit single took the album into the charts and it was eventually reassessed as a triumph, though ultimately it failed to match the sales success of First Rays of the New Rising Sun.

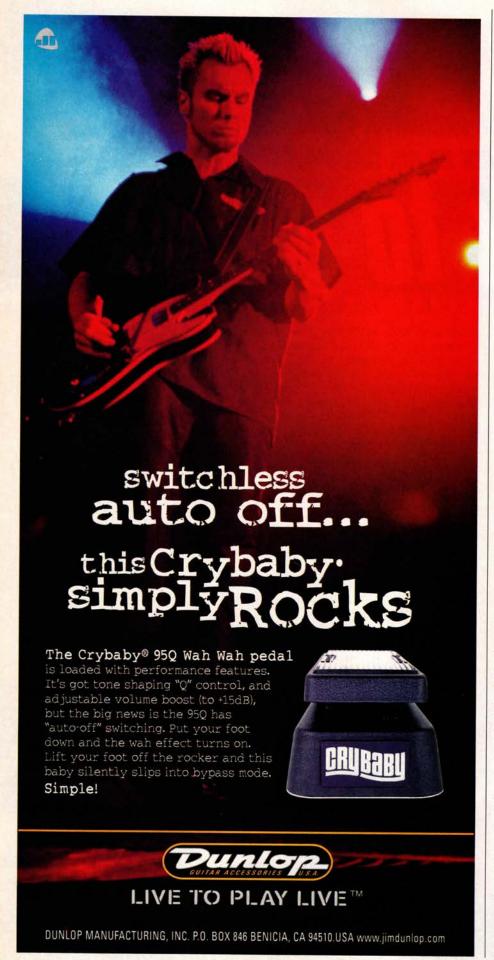
Relocating to Los Angeles in the early Eighties to maintain closer contacts with the film industry following his first ventures into soundtrack work, he was tempted by young admirers in the heavy metal fraternity to cut the ill-judged Back to Gitcha. The playing was as dazzling as ever, but the context sounded contrived: a ham-fisted attempt to recreate the early Experience sound. Worse, he started to dabble with serious drugs, and many observers believe that if the album hadn't been a failure, he would have been sucked back into the hard-rock lifestyle. His decision not to tour behind the album was undoubtedly a wise one. The movie work then took precedence: his soundtrack for the Arnold Schwarzenegger showcase Predator generated the spin-off U.S. No. 1 single "The Jungle Came Alive" (featuring a rap from the then-little-known KRS-1), which reinvigorated interest in his back catalog and resulted in a major reassessment of Black Gold.

In 1991, he retreated to Hawaii, where he numbers Todd Rundgren and Steely Dan's Walter Becker among his friends and neighbors. On his occasional excursions into the outside world, he sometimes pops up jamming in small clubs with friends like Buddy Guy or Prince, but his only major public appearances over the last couple of decades have been at global spectacles, like Live Aidwhere he reunited the original Experience for a blazing return to early glories-and the Nelson Mandela concerts, where he shared the stage with Stevie Wonder.









BACK TO GITCHA

To mark the release of *The Jimi Hendrix Experience*, the first volume of a boxed-set *Anthology*-style peek into the back pages of the first four years of his career, he granted this exclusive interview to his biographer, Charles Shaar Murray.

GUITAR WORLD The new boxed set is fantastic.

JIMI HENDRIX Uh, thank you. It's, like, the first one of a series. This one goes up to First Rays of the New Rising Sun, which was, like, a great place to draw a line. Because look what went down around that time: Janis passed. Jim Morrison passed. That cat in Canned Heat with, like, the big thick eyeglasses passed. The Beatles broke up. The, uh, U.S. National Guard shot all those student kids at Kent State for protestin' the war. All of the main guys in the Black Panther Party got shot up by the police or, like, locked down for 99 years, and so forth. It was like, whoah! That whole time was, like...a whole new era of music was gonna be startin' up and I knew I had to be there. Not 'cause I was so important or nothin'...it wasn't like I was goin' [in pompous voice], "Aw shit, they can't get along without me..." [laughs], ...but I realized [laughs]...I real eyesed that everything had to change.

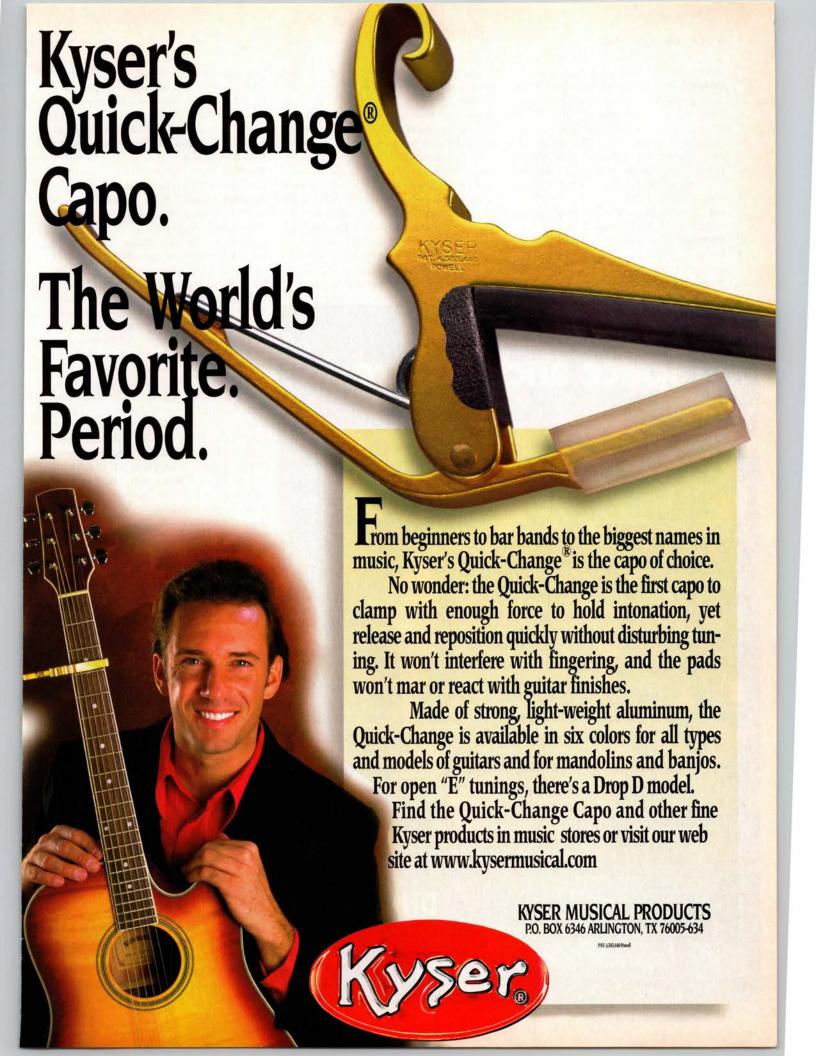
GW That was when you nearly died, wasn't it?

HENDRIX Yeah, right... I was in this chick's apartment in London and there was all kinds of bullshit goin' on, like, with the management and contracts and money and blahblah, and 'cause of that we was playin' all these shows in, uh, Europe and Sweden and Germany and so forth when we should have been back in New York finishin' up the album, and Bill Cox was all messed up 'cause some cat spiked him with some bad acid, so he was all freaked ... I just wanted to chill and get some rest, so I did a few of these sleeping pills that she had around. What I didn't know was that these German pills were, like, twice as strong as the ones I was used to, and the next thing I know I'm wakin' up in the hospital with, uh, Mitch and Keith Moon and Ginger Baker all playin' in my head at the same time, and I had this sore throat from all the, uh, tubes they put down me to pump my stomach. Oh, man...it was rough.

But, like, in a certain way it was the best thing that could possibly have happened. I knew if things had been just a little bit different I could died right there and then, with all the biz stuff in a mess and the album not finished...oh man, the thought of *First Rays* not comin' out just the way I had it planned, now that would have, ah...killed me all by itself.

So I got rid of the, uh, managers, and I got a good accountant to straighten everything out, finished up the record...

GW And you had the biggest album of your



career to date ...

HENDRIX And then I thought now it was time to step back, take a break. Five years, man, nonstop. I wasn't burned out, but I was getting' close to runnin' on empty. [in pretentious English voice] My reech was exceeding my grasp. I didn't even want to have a regular band no more. I wanted to play with some different cats I could learn some new shit from.

GW So you did the records with jazz greats Miles Davis and Gil Evans.

HENDRIX Yeah, Gil, man. He was incredible. He got all these great cats together to play my songs, and it was, like, *whoah*, man. Suddenly everything was Technicolor. It was

like he heard in those songs everything that I heard when I was writing them and tryin' [laughs]...tryin' to play 'em. And Miles was scary. The first time we tried to get it together he wanted \$50,000 just to walk in the studio...but we talked him down. Instead of bein' my record with him playin', it was his record with me playin'. On the Corner, man...you know he was cuttin' Bitches Brew while we was playin' Woodstock. All this new shit comin' together. He was, like, this Zen guy. He wouldn't tell you nothin' about the tune: he'd just hit some chords on the, uh, piano and give the drummer a beat and then...you'd kinda be on your own, but you wasn't on your own 'cause you'd be with him.

And Mitch was there, and you know Mitch always brought the jazz, so in that way it was easy. And Miles always said to forget about jazz...and don't even think about rock...just play music, you know? Forget about what you want. Just find out what the music wants and, uh, play that.

GW And then Stevie Wonder came to Electric Lady to make Music of My Mind...

HENDRIX [laughs] Yeah, Stevie. Stevie's a trip. I love Stevie. We met him in London in '67 and did some jammin' and stuff. So I was just hangin' out and watchin' him doin' all this stuff with Moog and ARP synthesizers and so forth. So there was me, tryin' to get the guitar together all these years, and, uh, suddenly there was all these sounds on this Starship Enterprise thing. And I thought, Oh man, now I got to learn me some keyboards so I could get this shit together...or maybe I can put the guitar through the Moog and play it that way.

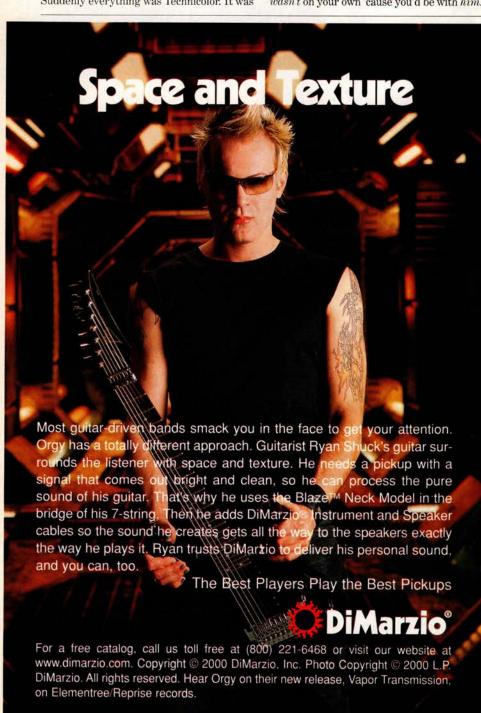
So I played a little bit on Stevie's record, and I did a little jammin' with various cats here and there, but really, man, I hardly touched the guitar for two or three years. I bought the Moog and the ARP and blahblah, woof-woof...Pete Townshend had some of that stuff too, so we was talkin' about what we was doin'. I mean, man, all that [does mouth impression of the sequencer parts from "Baba O'Riley" and "Won't Get Fooled Again"] was...a different world. And I worked with all the synths, but guess what, man...[laughs] I wasn't no keyboard player, though I learned some stuff since.

But it was great to be away from the, uh, battlefield. All that whole hard rock shit had just gotten so crazy, with Led Zeppelin and all that, and Black Sabbath. It was like this arms race or something: who was faster, who was louder, who could solo for longest...it wasn't just that we couldn't win, it was like no one could win. Just like the real arms race, you know? So it just got to be time to say, like, "Later for that." [laughs] "See ya. Bye-bye."

GW So when Eddie Van Halen came along...
HENDRIX [laughs] Whoah, man, now that
was scary. [laughs] Dwiddley-dwiddleydwiddley-wheeeee-graaaaowwwwwwww! It
was like some old cowboy movie, you know?
The doors of the saloon swing open and some
cat walks in and comes right up to you:
[drops into deep, drawly Robert
Mitchum-type voice] "Hey stranger, they
tell me you're fast."

GW It was so amazing when you put the original Experience back together for the Live Aid concert.

HENDRIX [laughs] Whoah, man...now that was sort of funny. I mean, you should have seen the rehearsal. Me and Noel was friends again, sort of, but he'd been playing guitar all those years back in Ireland and it took a while for him to find his groove again on the,



uh, basso profundo. And then it was, like, "What do we play?" We thought we'd do two of the old songs and maybe jam on something like some old r&b or rock and roll thing. So okay, we do "Fire," no problem; we do "Purple Haze" [laughs, parodies his own singing]...you know, uh, "pupple heeeeeyyyyyyzzzzz...," no problem. Then we go, Okay, what else? Someone else's song, right? Noel wants to do some, like, Jerry Lee Lewis-type thing. Mitch is holding out for us doin' something of our own, like "Angel," 'cept that back in the day we did that with Billy, and Noel doesn't know it...and I'm thinkin' maybe we could try something by Stevie, like "Superstition," or maybe, like, you know, "Get Up Stand Up" by Bob Marley...and it was just like the old days...you know, arguing.

Then we got there and everything was running late, and the sound was weird and it was, like, real old-time, like the, uh, package shows in the real, real, real old days, like with Little Richard or Sam Cooke and them. That conveyor-belt thing, you know: "Get 'em on the stage!" Three songs. "Get 'em off the stage! They're over-running by, uh, 13 and 1/8 of a second! They're screwing things up for the, uh, television!" Blah-blah, woofwoof, all this, you know. So everything is runnin' overtime, and all these cats with, like, uh, the ear-goggles and the walkie-talkies and the clipboards are goin' nuts, and Bob Geldof is screamin' at everybody, you know, fockin' this an' fockin' that ... and then we only get to do two songs after all.

And guess what? We had, like, this rerun of Monterey because, uh, the Who were there, and it was great seein' Pete again an' all, but it was right back to, "Uh-uh, I ain't goin' on after you guys"..."Well, we ain't goin' on after you." And then we both started laughin', because now we all grown up [laughs]; we don't be havin' to be provin' shit no more. We was all like kids back then, you know: like me-me-me-me all of the time. Now we seen them glam bands and punk bands and New Romantic bands and heavy metal bands all come and go.

GW What did you think of all those different styles?

HENDRIX It was like...pop music, you know? It was cool for what it was and where it was, but I felt like now I was someplace else. Roxy Music had somethin' goin' on, with Eno and all his sounds...and David Bowie was, like...I mean [laughs], I had "'Scuse me while I kiss this guy," [laughs] but he was, like, him and his guitar player was, like, "Scuse me while I blow this guy." [laughs]

GW What about punk?

HENDRIX It was real, you know? It was rough [laughs], but it was real. Like some raggedy little dog goin' row-row-row all in your face and so forth. Chained up, barkin'. Just straight-up angry shit. I mean, it wasn't

like me and Pete didn't know about feelin' like smashin' shit up. It's part how you feel, and part...drama.

GW What was it like sitting in with the Clash?

HENDRIX Well [laughs], it was different. The reggae thing helped, 'cause Stevie turned me on to Bob Marley and them. A different groove, you know?

GW What kind of music do your kids like? **HENDRIX** Rap, rap and rap [laughs], and just for a change, a little bit of hip-hop. Jaco, the oldest, he's starting to check out some jazz, but he got it from, you know, Gang Starr and Digable Planets and all this. You know how it is. They're real hardcore about

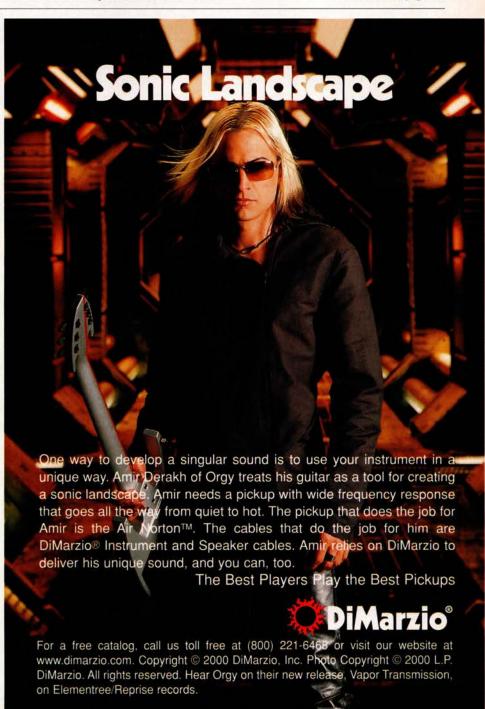
not bein' into whatever the old man's into. The rap I dig is more like, you know, De La Soul or P.M. Dawn. More inner space than in-your-face. [laughs]

GW What's the biggest mistake you ever made?

HENDRIX [laughs] Man...you got all week? **GW** How about Back to Gitcha?

HENDRIX [groans] What's that? Never heard of it! Uh, naw, man. That was so not a good idea. I just had all these young guys from, uh, Poison and Guns N' Roses and so forth...Slash was practically livin' at my house and sayin', "Hey, you gotta come back and show everybody how it's done," and

continued on page 103







stone free

In the Experience, drummer Mitch Mitchell was free to ride the breeze and do what he pleased.

And that suited Jimi Hendrix just fine.

BY ANDY ALEDORT







On October 6, 1966, drummer Mitch Mitchell found himself at a London rehearsal studio auditioning for an American guitarist he knew nothing about named Jimi Hendrix.

"It was strange," Mitchell remembers. "I had gotten a call from Jimi's manager, Chas Chandler, and the next I knew I was playing in this cramped basement with this black guy with very, very wild hair. It was immediately apparent that he was a good guitarist, but I was more knocked out that he could cover so many different styles as well. You name it, and he could do it."

Jimi liked Mitch's style as well, but he

also liked John Mayall drummer Aynsley Dunbar. So, Jimi and Chandler flipped a coin, and the winner was Mitchell, thus beginning one of the most fruitful and musically inspiring guitarist-drummer relationships in the history of rock.

The short list of rock's truly elite drummers would include Cream's Ginger Baker, Led Zeppelin's John Bonham, the Who's Keith Moon and Mitch Mitchell. Of these four innovators, the Experience drummer was perhaps the most daring and exciting. Possessing an explosive, wholly unique style earmarked by blazing speed and an adventurous,

forward-looking spirit, Mitchell's playing owes more to the intense rhythmic complexity of jazz drummers like Elvin Jones and Tony Williams than to any in the field of rock. Mitch also holds distinction as the man whose playing style most aptly suited the ferocious fire and fury of Jimi Hendrix, as the two remained musical compatriots throughout Jimi's life. In fact, the tumultuous, thunderous drumming of Mitch Mitchell was intrinsic to the power of the music created by the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

Born July 9, 1947, John "Mitch" Mitchell showed an interest in drums from a very





I feel very, very fortunate to have had the opportunity to have worked with someone so inspiring to play with, someone who was not scared of the unknown. 55 —Mitch Mitchell on playing with Jimi Hendrix

young age. "At three or four, I liked banging on the boxes at Christmastime better than playing with the toys that came inside them," he says. Mitch gravitated toward show business and studied tap dancing, an art that he feels is strongly connected with drumming. At 12, he starred in English afternoon TV shows such as Jennings at School, Whacko and Emergency-Ward 10, soon followed by In Search of Adventure. "That was a dreadful show," Mitchell moans. "There was no script; it was totally improvised, and we had to do things like go and interview the 'button queen of Portobello Road'," he says, and laughs.

At 13, he began drumming in bands, and by the time Mitchell was 18, in 1965, he was a member of the Riot Squad, a band that included keyboardist Jon Lord, later of Deep Purple. Playing with the Riot Squad raised his profile and brought him to the attention of the renowned British organist Georgie Fame. Mitchell performed with Fame's backing group, the Blue Flames, for 18 months, at which point he was called to audition with Hendrix.

"Playing with Jimi was like being released from prison," says Mitchell. "The Blue Flames were a very structured and tightly arranged unit, and the Experience was just the opposite. To have as much freedom as we had, and to have another musician prepared to give you that freedom, was a most fortunate thing."

Following Hendrix's death in 1970, Mitch kept a low profile. He appeared on one album with the band Ramatam, and in the mid Seventies played with Hinkley's Heroes. After that, he dropped from the radar completely; even rabid Hendrix fans heard nothing from him.

The truth is that Mitch has continued to

do session work, however selectively, ever since. In 1997, while living in France, he received an invitation to come back to the U.S. to record. "I was watching MTV-a very rare thing for me-with my daughter at my home in France. The country guitarist Junior Brown came on, and I ended up watching for a few minutes. It was an odd thing, because, a few days later, I got a call asking me if I'd like to come to Nashville to record with Junior Brown! I came over, and immediately started to get more calls to play. That gig was supposed to last a week to 10 days, and it turned out to be six weeks. My second gig there ended up lasting three months.

"So, Nashville has become my second spiritual home. And it's turned out to be really pleasant, because Nashville is where [Jimi Hendrix bassist] Billy Cox is located, and we've reacquainted. We started playing

together again for the first time in 30 years, and it's been wonderful."

In the past year, Mitch has continued to record and perform with Brown as well as with guitarists such as Larry Coryell, Scott Holt and Tendure, a protégé of Billy Cox. "I feel very fortunate for all the musical experiences I've had in my life," says Mitchell, "and I'm very grateful to be playing today as much as I am."

An intensely private individual, Mitchell has granted very few interviews over the 30 years since Hendrix's passing. He was kind enough to lend his time to Guitar World for this special Jimi Hendrix commemorative issue.

GUITAR WORLD How did you develop such a unique, powerful drum style?

MITCH MITCHELL I'd played in bands since I was about 13, and, when I was 15, I started playing clubs all over Germany. It was slave labor; the gigs lasted for hours and hours. But you did get your chops together.

GW Did you take drum lessons?

MITCHELL When I was about 12, Jim Marshall, of Marshall amplifier fame, opened a music store in Ealing about two miles away from where I lived. This was before he was making amplifiers. He had a drum school, and I was in a band with his son. I only took about two or three lessons, and soon I had a job at Jim's store as the "Saturday boy." But because I wouldn't stick with the drum lessons, Jim made me work in the guitar shop across the road. That turned out to be one of the best things anyone ever did for me!

GW What were the benefits of working in the guitar shop?

MITCHELL I got to meet all of the great players, and I always knew who was in need of a drummer. Ealing was not the mainstream of the music scene, which was 20 miles away in London. But the Who came from Ealing, Ritchie Blackmore was around, and Big Jim Sullivan [Session guitarist for Marianne Faithfull, Donovan, Savoy Brown and David Bowie, among others-GW Ed.], Jimmy Page and the Stones would come in. The Animals would come all the way from the other side of the country, and Screaming Lord Sutch, too. Whenever a drummer got sick, I was there for the gig.

GW When you first played with Jimi Hendrix, did you feel a connection with him? MITCHELL Not while we were playing, but when I got back home, I felt there was something about him that was quite intriguing. You don't learn much about someone after playing with them for the first half hour or hour. At that brief session, we looked for the common denominators: a bit of Chuck Berry and some Wilson Pickett, because we had no other tunes to pull from. I flippantly threw out a comment about Curtis Mayfield, and he had that style down cold. He was the first person that I'd ever seen that not only knew the style but could play it masterfully in an instant. It was only purely by chance that I'd made that Curtis Mayfield reference, and that struck a chord with him.

It wasn't until we got onstage, in front of an audience, that I saw what he was really about. That's when I saw and heard more of the styles that he was capable of. And I certainly didn't expect him to have this "showman" capacity that was so astounding. I hadn't seen that in rehearsals! [laughs]

GW You were still quite young-about 19when you first recorded with Jimi. The drum parts you devised for Are You Experienced songs like "I Don't Live Today," "Manic Depression" and "Third Stone from the Sun" are brilliant.

MITCHELL The interesting thing for me about working with Jimi was that I'd found someone that really enjoyed spending a lot of time in the studio and was prepared to spend as much time as possible experimenting. He was great to work with-he allowed me the freedom to experiment with sounds, and the engineers I worked with were helpful as well. We were working with very limited equipment at the time: tape recorders didn't have very many tracks, and you couldn't just push a button to get phasing or whatever, like you can now. It was the right time for the



sounds we made.

GW How would you describe the way you and Jimi spurred each other on?

MITCHELL I feel very, very fortunate to have had the opportunity to have worked with someone so inspiring to play with, someone who was not scared of the unknown. There were no musical boundaries playing with Jimi. With certain players, you may take a certain musical perspective with the intention of trying to push them into new areas, but sometimes musicians may be too scared, or uncomfortable, to take chances. Their instinct is, "Uh-oh—don't know about this one! Let's revert to the safe zone." That notion didn't exist with

Jimi. From that point of view, it's only once in a blue moon that you are fortunate enough to find someone like that.

GW In the Experience, the onus was on blazing new trails, so much so that you, Jimi and Noel sound excited yourselves about the sounds you were making.

MITCHELL Yes, that's true. We had the attitude that what we did in the studio was one thing and what we did onstage was completely different. There were a great many songs that we only played once, when the song was recorded, and we never played that song again. Maybe some of it for a good reason, I hasten to add! [laughs] There was no attempt—and no chance—of us trying to

recreate the studio recordings in the live setting. That just didn't enter into the equation.

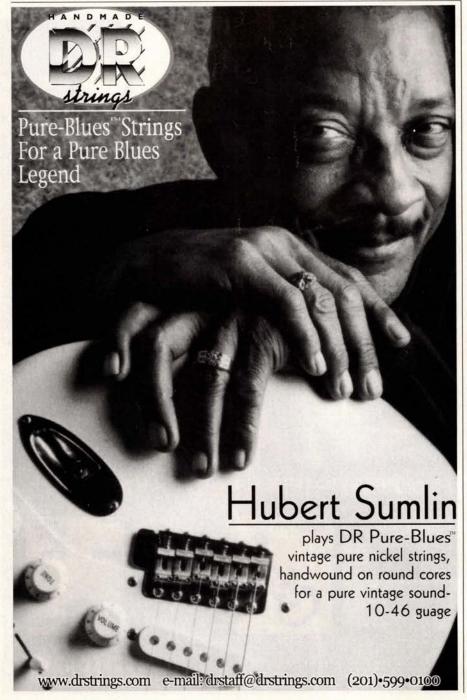
One thing that was very important to Jimi and myself, on a friendship basis, is that no matter where we were, especially on the early U.S. tours, we'd always be looking for a jam. We'd be in the boondocks-the armpit of wherever-having just played two shows, and we had to be up at six in the morning. Jimi would say, "Wait a second, I know this guitarist down the road...," and it might have been a Roy Buchanan, or someone like that, and he'd say, "Let's go and play." From day one, that attitude was always, always there, and I got to meet, see and play with a lot of incredible players. We were in Chicago once, and Jimi took me over to the south side where all of the blues clubs were, and I got to play with guys like Buddy Guy. By the same token, I also got to play with [jazz saxophonist] Roland Kirk. There was a great environment of "give and take" with musicians then, and I got to participate in all kinds of things because of Jimi.

GW Your style of playing—the incredible energy and spontaneity—worked extremely well with Jimi's style of guitar playing. How would you describe the way the arrangements and the interaction between the guitar and the drums came together?

MITCHELL That was not something that we would really discuss; if we did, it was the rare occasion. There were times when I may have said to Jimi, "What do you hear on this one?" because sometimes I didn't always spot his intended rhythm of the line, or specifically where "one" [the first beat of the measure] was. I had no problem saying, "Well, I'm playing this, but what do you hear on this tune?" Here and there, Jimi would give me specific ideas about what to play. A couple of times, I'd walk into the studio and Jimi would be playing my kit, and his drumming was very good-he played drums in a way similar to Stevie Wonder. Like his bass playing, Jimi's drumming indicated his roots in Motown and soul and r&b. That kind of playing, that sound, was required for the band. That's why, from my side, when Billy Cox came into the band, it was a breath of fresh air. It did free things up-there was no doubt about it.

GW What would you say are Jimi's greatest contributions as a musician?

may be too close to the woods to see the trees. Jimi was not a pompous man—he was aware of some of his capabilities, but he was a very humble person. I think he would be generally thrilled that so many people have picked up the guitar, or whatever instrument, because of hearing his playing, just as he had picked up inspiration from hearing Muddy Waters. Since his unfortunate passing, there are a few generations of people have been and are still being inspired by him.



That's a wonderful legacy to have.

I hope that people are aware of the many different flavors of his music. It's a small body of work, considering what could have been and the many directions that it could have followed. There were so many sides to his playing, and that was always astounding to me. As a guitarist, he covered so many bases.

GW By the time he was 24, Jimi had acquired a massive knowledge of musical styles on the guitar.

MITCHELL The depth of that knowledge was bizarre in many ways. He did carry his guitar with him everywhere, and it's been well documented that he'd take the guitar to the bathroom, to the dinner table, et cetera. He had his instrument with him a lot of the time. But what surprised me, to a giant degree, was the great amount of wisdom and the great vocabulary the man had acquired in so many areas of musical language. That's not necessarily something that can be taught from one human being to another. That was a natural talent he had.

GW Can you cite one particular gig with Jimi that was really special?

MITCHELL It's difficult to pick out one gig, be it with Billy or with the Experience, that stood out from the rest. I can't really go there. There are fond memories of great gigs, and there were some bad gigs, too.

I'll tell you story that I think sums up the relationship between Jimi and me. We were recording in New York, around the time when we hung out at the [Steve Paul's] Scene club, in '68. I was sleeping in the hotel room, and Jimi came by, guitar case in hand. It was about one o'clock in the morning, and he said, "I want you to come with me right now." I said, "Why?" And he said, "There's a play [jam session]." So I said, "Okay, fine," and we jumped in the car and went downtown to this mammoth hall.

As we walked through the door, I could see that this was some kind of get-together, a kind of giant black hootenanny, and Joe Tex and his band were onstage. This hootenanny had obviously been going on for quite some time when we got there. That was the first time I met [legendary r&b/soul musicians] Bernard Purdie and also Cornell Dupree, whom Jimi dearly loved as a player. Quite frankly, I was the only white person in the place. But here I was, getting up to play with Jimi, Joe Tex and a big 17-piece band, no rehearsal, no nothing! It was like nothing we'd ever done together before, and it was great—it felt incredible! We were taking all kinds of chances musically. I appreciate the fact that he knew that I would dig playing with a big band, and he made a point of knocking on my door, getting me out of bed and bringing me down there. That meant a lot to me.

GW How would you describe the personal

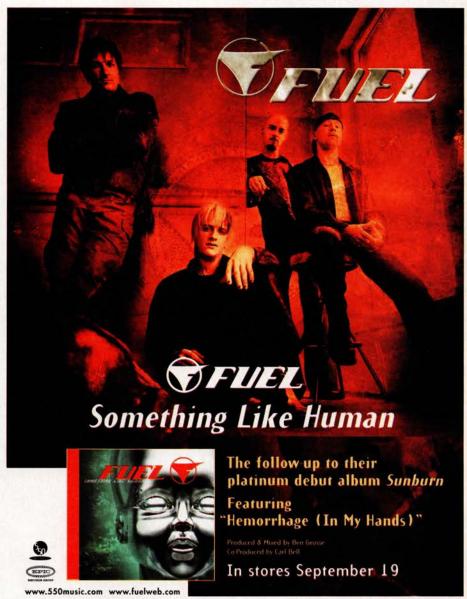
relationship you had with Jimi?

MITCHELL Well, you know ... [pause] There's no stock answer for that. Our friendship evolved from us going through so many different experiences together. I like to think that, in the years that we spent together, I did my best to encourage Jimi to play with as many different people as possible. I got Tony Williams to come down to the studio one night to play with Jimi. And Jimi would encourage me to play with as many different people as possible, too. That was an ongoing thing. Had he lived, I know I wouldn't have been the only drummer that he would have played with, nor should I have been. He should have had the chance to

play with all of the Steve Gadds of the world, or whomever.

But, I like to think that, because we had a pretty unique situation-both of us respected each other, with all of our idiosyncrasies and quirks-we would have continued to get together a few times a year, at least, and continued to try to push the envelope together.

When you can meet someone in your life that is musically as off the wall as you are, where there are simply no rules, that's something else. And I cherish my relationship with Jimi, warts and all. The man was my friend, and of course I miss him. That's the way it is. 🗪



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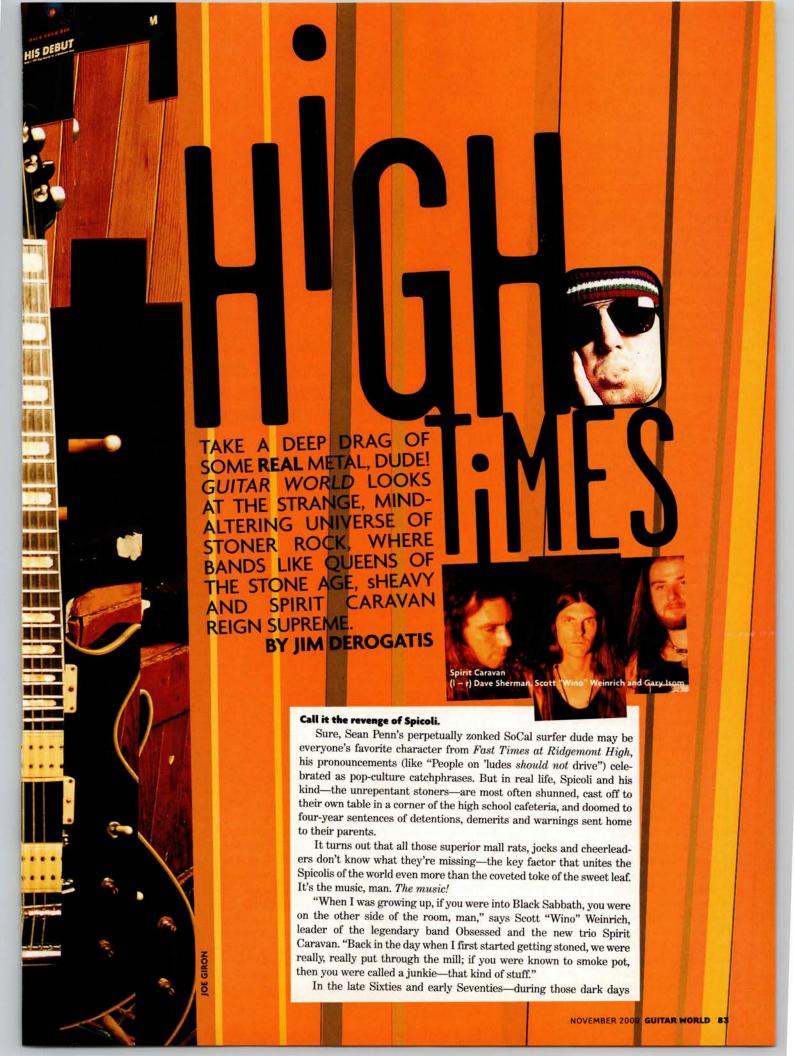
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after the violence at Altamont and the death of the Woodstock nation, but before Richard M. Nixon succumbed to the Watergate scandal and the last chopper pulled away from Saigon in shame—rock was dominated by twee simps at one extreme (James Taylor and his folk-rock ilk) and manufactured bublegum fads at the other (Osmonds, Jacksons and Partridges, ad nauseum).

At the same time, away from the harsh glare of the mainstream spotlight, a new rock underground was being born, combining the live intensity of jammed-out bluesrockers like Cream and the Yardbirds with the psychedelic invention of studio masterpieces like the Beatles' Revolver and the Who's Tommy. In time, this collision would give birth to a mighty new genre called heavy metal. But there were always bands that didn't quite fit that appellation—that were more melodic or more inventive, smarter or trippier. Stoner bands.

Fast forward two and a half decades and we find the same combination of influences converging again, serving once more as a vital rock alternative to a mainstream dominated by boisterous rap-rockers at one extreme (Limp Bizkit, Korn, Eminem and their ilk) and manufactured bubblegum fads at the other (Backstreets, Britneys and 'N Syncs, ad nauseum).

This time the sound has a name: stoner rock. But as with ska-punk, emo and every other promising new genre to erupt in the last few years, its practitioners have been reluctant to embrace a moniker, knowing full well (thanks to the enduring lesson of grunge) that naming a new movement is just one small step from diluting it, marketing it and ruining it forever.

One camp favors a broader use of terms. "I might use the word 'stoner' in my lyrics, but I think we're really metal, dude, or just plain rock and roll," says Matt Pike, the driving force behind Sleep and High on Fire. Another camp persists in slicing and dicing the burgeoning movement into ever finer and more exclusive subgenres, breaking stoner rock down into categories like dirt rock, desert rock, biker rock (the Steppenwolf sound), and beard rock (à la ZZ Top). Since the early Nineties, the Europeans have been calling it "doom," a name redolent of gothic trappings, like black nail polish and bat wings.

Name it what you will, it's hard to deny
the kindred spirit and unifying vibe shared
by this new wave of hard-rocking, uncompromising, but never less than ultra-melodic
bands. Most of them hail from the U.S.—primarily the California desert—but a sizable
European contingent, mainly from the U.K.,
exists as well. To date, they are recording
mostly for a small but select group of indie
abels, including England's Rise Above
which is distributed in the U.S. by the Music



The first record came out and everybody was like, 'Wow, it sounds so much like Sabbath.' We understand the connection, but there was so much more there. —Ren Squires

Cartel) and San Francisco's Man's Ruin (the company started by renowned poster artist Frank Kozik).

As with any interesting rock hybrid, the hallmarks of the stoner-rock sound are hard to pin down. Music Cartel founder Eric Lemasters suggests they are "your basic three instruments rocking away with a straightforward beat and no distractions. The term 'stoner rock' applies to those bands that play rock music with everything a little more... distorted. Heavy metal was the first music to put a faster beat with the distortion. Stoner rock has taken all of those elements and slowed them back down, so you've still got the distortion and the aggression but not necessarily the speed. Although there are faster bands, too."

Confused? Maybe the best way to get a grip on the sound and the movement is with a list of symbols epitomizing both. Stoner rock is often about flaming gongs, massive Marshalls, SVTs, vintage Vistalite drum sets, long hair, tattoos, ear-crunching volume, heavy-duty ride cymbals, huge humalong riffs, fuzztone, fuzztone and more fuzztone, tongue-in-cheek lyrical references to drug manuals and role-playing fantasy games, Russ Meyer movies, a big underground buzz, beer, black lights and bongs.

Stoner rock is almost *never* about drum machines or synthesizers, hair gel, love songs, rapping (freestyle or otherwise), "unplugged" anything or MTV-level hype.

Still baffled? Let's proceed to the following profiles of the leading lights from four of the finest bands on the current stoner scene—the Queens of the Stone Age, Spirit Caravan, High On Fire, and sHEAVY—as well as some Cliffs Notes—style guides to essential recent releases, classic influences, and sources for further study.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

It's early in the tour on Ozzfest 2000, and Josh Homme, the guitarist, vocalist, and key auteur behind the Queens of the Stone Age, is diplomatically hedging on the cell phone in his tour bus, doing his best *not* to say just how much this year's rap-rock-dominated lineup sucks.

"Uh, it's not all my cup of tea," Homme finally grants. "But I'm backing Pantera and Incubus and Ozzy, and there's some other good bands, too. If there's rapping and shit like that, and the music is too hip-hop, it's out of my element. I'm not really down with the merge."

For many in the stoner-rock community, the Queens represent the genre's best chance to break big, reintroducing the masses of Generation Y to real rock and roll, the way Nirvana did at the outset of the Nineties. After all, Homme was a member of the hugely influential Kyuss before the Queens released its strong self-titled debut in 1998. More recently, the group released its second album, the hard-hitting Rated R, whose single, "The Lost Art of Keeping a Secret," has cracked modern-rock radio, unleashing an all-out hypefest from the band's label, Interscope.

Given all this momentum, it struck some of the stoner faithful as a huge disappointment—if not a downright sell-out—to find the Queens linking up with the tired, corpo-

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rate Ozzfest instead of headlining a stonerrock march to triumph. But this betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the king Queen's character: Homme is clearly an adherent to the Groucho Marx maxim that he wouldn't want to belong to any club that would have him as a member.

"I see us not fitting into it at all," the guiarist says of the movement he helped spawn. In my own mind, it's something that exists without me. Kyuss was around before the erm existed, and I don't believe that either these Queens records are stoner-rock cords. When we're included in the category, always feel like the outsider. I've always tried to be outside of whatever's going on-I play rock and roll because I want to do something that someone else isn't doing."

Well, sure, who doesn't? But the band's moniker nods pretty directly at the name of the genre. And isn't a song like Rated R's "Feel Good Hit of the Summer" (with its irresistible chorus of "Nicotine, Valium, Vicodan, marijuana, Ecstasy and alcohol!") designed as a stoner-rock anthem?

"I might be, or it might be like a knife in the neck of stoner rock," Homme says, hedging once again. "It's hard to tell, and I think that's the good part about it. Look, you're always going to get labeled with something. Stoner rock is kind of a dumbing-down label, and that's why I don't gravitate toward it.

And I think some of the bands that embrace it are under the influence of some of the other bands a little bit too much."

One of the bands doing the influencing is, of course, Kyuss. Taking its name from some monsters called "the Sons of Kyuss" in the Dungeons & Dragons book Deities and Demigods, the quartet burst out of Palm Desert, California, in 1991, unleashing a pounding, fuzz-laden sound that fell somewhere between punk, metal and grunge. The group toured relentlessly and delivered four albums that were beloved by its fans, but it never rose much above cult status. There are now 1,000 people who claim to have been at every Kyuss show that actually drew 100.

Though the band is pretty much revered in the current stoner-rock underground, Homme refused to dwell in the past. "If such a world exists, I wouldn't want to live there," he says. "I want people to dig it and enjoy it, but I want them to do it without me." The difference between Kyuss and his new band is partly one of attitude-Homme chose the Queens' name in part to tweak macho metalheads—and partly one of sonic approach. Mixed in with the Queens' metal/punk overdrive is a melodic, trance-inducing quality that owes as much to Seventies Krautrock (including German art-rockers such as Can, Neu! and Kraftwerk) as it does to New Wave synth-poppers like Devo and Gary Numan.

"I learned a lot with Kyuss," says Homme, "and I didn't want to be in a situation again where you just have to play something heavy, because if you don't, then everyone's gonna go, 'What's your problem?' It just seemed like this band should be something that's too greasy to hold on to. I also think Kyuss was adamant about not showing its influences, and that's partly to do with how we misunderstood that term. If you compared us to another band, we would have taken it as you saying we were copying that band. Anything that got close to anything else, we'd go, 'Can't play it, sorry.' At this point, I realize what you're saving is that if you like this, you might like that. It's more inspirational than mimicry."

The final difference between the Queens and Kyuss is that the Queens aren't really a band—at least not in the sense that Kyuss was. Homme considers himself and bassist Nick Oliveri (a veteran of shock-punkers the Dwarves) to be the only permanent members of his new group. An impressive cast of contributors comes and goes onstage and on the albums: Rated R includes cameos by Rob Halford, Chris Goss of Masters of Reality and Barrett Martin of the Screaming Trees. (Homme served as second guitarist with the latter group on its final album.)

"I'd like to keep it loose, open and free," Homme says of the Queens' lineup. "I just



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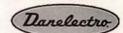
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think that if we can expand and contract, then there's nothing we can't do, and even the old songs will never be something like, 'Oh, let's not play that anymore.' "

Is there room for such invention from a hard-rocking band in these dire pop times, with teenyboppers at one end of the spectrum and rock rappers at the other?

"That's the beauty of it," Homme says. "I'm sort of free to run the range, because I'm not competing with that bullshit. I couldn't ask for a better time. It would be much worse if there were a bunch of bands trying to sound like us; I'd be walking amongst the 'sheeple.' Now I just kind of get to walk freely. I prefer that."

KEY RECORDINGS Kyuss' four albums are all pretty much essential. They include Wretch (Dali, 1991), Blues for the Red Sun (Dali, 1992), Welcome to Sky Valley (Elektra, 1994) and ... And the Circus Leaves Town (Elektra, 1995). (Sky Valley is probably the best place to start.)

Both Queens discs deliver the goods, though Rated R is a bit slighter and more irreverent than its predecessor is. Homme has also overseen six volumes of Desert Sessions discs on Man's Ruin, featuring jammed-out collaborations with pals from Soundgarden, Fu Manchu, Monster Magnet and Wool, among others. Find them at www.mansruin.com.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT HIS GUITAR SOUND "My own guitar

playing is much more focused now," says Homme. "I pick my spots. I've always wanted to be able to sing whatever I played, so that it's more of a melody and not a guitar solo. That's what's so great about Sabbath or the Stooges. You can sing the lead parts from both of those bands, so there's something happening instead of just straight-up chords. Sometimes chords are all you get, but other times you get hook lines that run through the whole song. I think those are very important because they involve what you don't play as opposed to what you do play."

AFTER KYUSS, NO PROTO-STONER BAND HAS been more of an inspiration than the Obsessed.

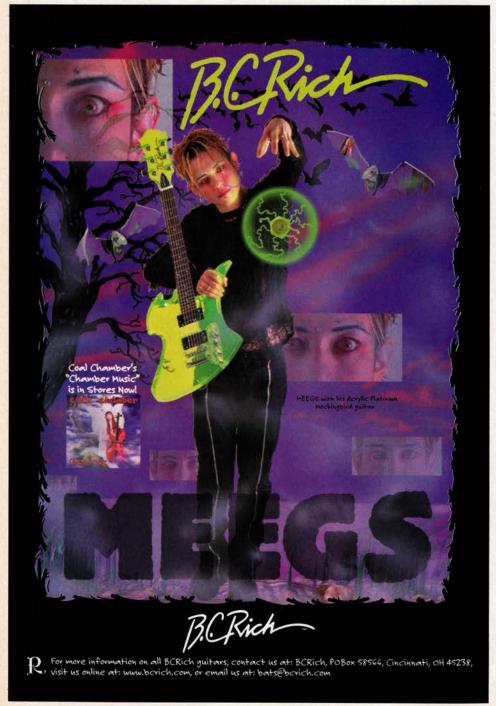
"I appreciate the legendary status, because I've been at this since the mid Seventies," says guitarist/vocalist Scott Weinrich, better known as Wino. "When people like Phil Anselmo tell me, 'Wino and the Obsessed were instrumental in helping me go on,' or Fugazi tell me that's one of the reasons they started playing, that gives me a good feeling."

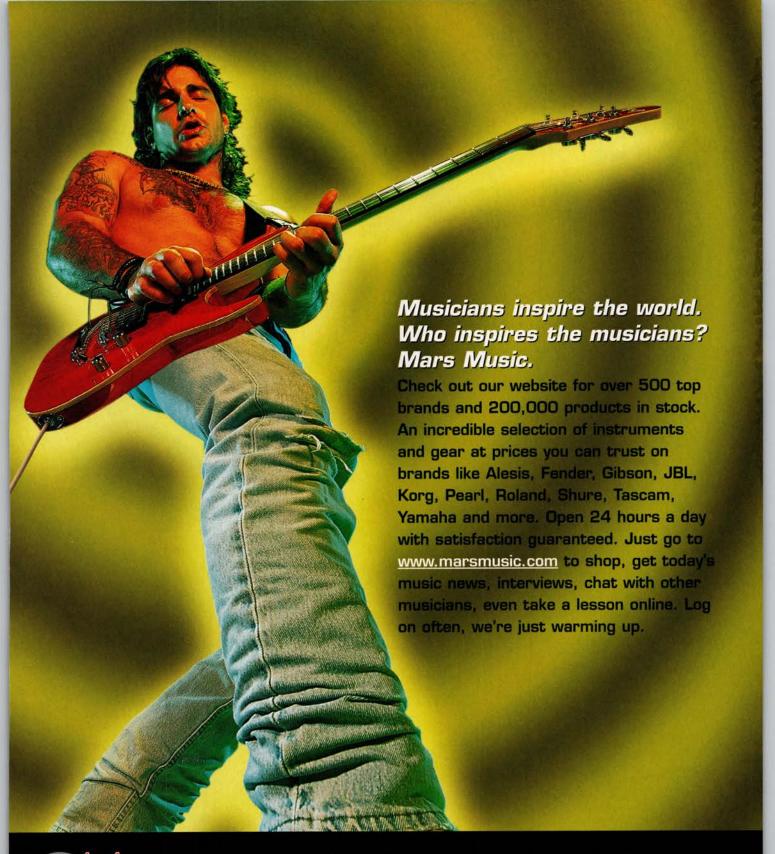
The Obsessed was renowned in the early Eighties as the only band that could bring Washington, D.C.'s famous straightedge punk scene together with the stoner/metalhead crowd. The two disparate camps were united by the sheer joy and intensity of the band's music, which mixed equal parts Stooges, Black Sabbath and Blue Cheer and threw in the occasional Dead Boys or Dictators cover for good measure. The band went through numerous lineup changes, released a string of indie records, loaned Wino out to the SST group St. Vitus and-through sheer persistence endurance-eventually found itself signed to Columbia. (The lineup that released 1994's The Church Within featured bassist Scott Reeder, who went on to join Kyuss.)

"In the end we all know what happens if you don't have a big hit," Wino says philosophically. In short, the time wasn't right, and The Church Within flopped. "Plus, I picked up a couple of bad habits, and all of these factors contributed to end of the Obsessed, I took a long hiatus somewhere in the mid Nineties-three years of no musical productivity. They're lost years, but you know, it was a logical progression of what had to happen, like house cleaning. And it didn't kill me."

Eventually, Wino began jamming with two friends and veterans of the doom scene, bassist Gary Isom (Iron Man, Pentagram) and drummer Dave Sherman (Love Razor, Wretched). "I was still reeling from everything, and I was not 100 percent sure I was ready to start again from scratch." But the power of the new trio's electric sludge was

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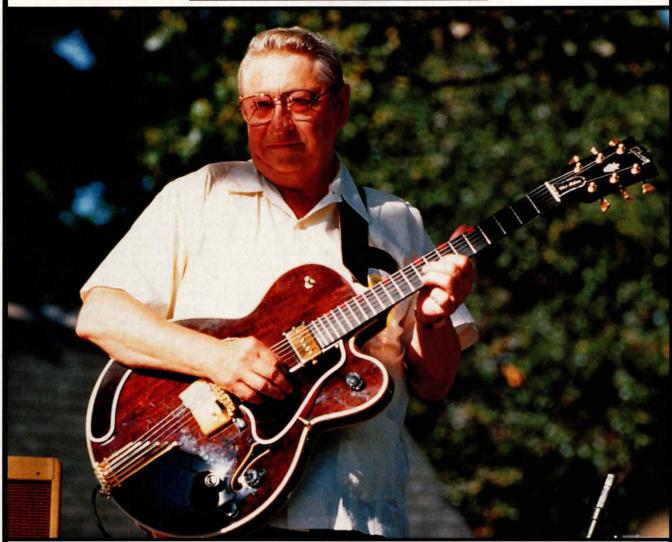
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Scotty Moore

The man who made it possible for Elvis to rock.

BY KEITH WYATT

If young Scotty Moore walked into a casting session for the role of

rock and roll guitar hero, he would be rejected without a second thought. With his boyish, pointy features, carefully combed hair, bow tie and stock-still stage presence, Moore in 1954 looked more like the dry-cleaning man he had been than the genre-defining musical inspiration he would become. But while Moore may visually have been the anti-Elvis, it was precisely that solid, supportive quality that, when translated into musical terms lit the match to Presley's explosive charisma. In fact, if he hadn't met Scotty Moore, Elvis might very well have remained an anonymous country singer. But Moore would probably have come out the same either way—a man comfortable with who he is, appreciative of the opportunities he's had, and a marvelous guitar player.

HISTORY AND INFLUENCES

In retrospect, it's clear that the early Fifties music scene in Memphis possessed the latent power of nitro and glycerine, side by side, ready to mix. Young B.B. King, Ike Turner and Junior Parker were strolling down one end of Beale Street while young Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Burnette were strolling up the other. Producer Sam Phillips was busy recording fresh, intense music at his Sun Records studio under the separate, racially divided categories of r&b and hillbilly, and he was developing a sneaking suspicion that somewhere between the two lay a gold mine.

Into this crosscurrent walked a guitar-playing ex-navy seaman named Scotty Moore. Born in Gadsden, Tennessee, in 1931, Scotty had picked up his first guitar—a Kalamazoo—at age eight and began emulating his musical father and older brothers. Moore kept at it even after the rest of the family quit playing, and when he joined the navy at age 16, his guitar went with him. Discharged after a four-year hitch that took him to China, Japan and Korea, Scotty settled in Memphis and took a job in his brother's dry-cleaning store while trying to get something going as a player. After freelancing for a while, he hooked up with a bass player named Bill Black and

THE AX MUSEUM PORTRAITS OF GUITAR HEROES

SCOTTY MOORE

assembled his first real band, the Starlight Wranglers. Like most working bands around Memphis, the Wranglers played a style known as honky tonk, based on country but incorporating blues, jump, swing—any style the crowd wanted to hear. Moore continued to school himself in the thumbpicked bass patterns and sophisticated melodies of country guitarists Merle Travis and his disciple Chet Atkins. But he also went beyond country, absorbing ideas from jazz guitarists Tal Farlow and Barney Kessel, jazz/pop/rock pioneer Les Paul and then-rising blues star B.B. King.

In the early Fifties, there were only two viable record companies in Memphis—RPM, essentially a blues label, and Sun Records, which recorded all styles. Moore knew that the Wranglers would need to get a record out in order to get beyond the local level, so he introduced himself to Sam Phillips and was eventually able to get the band into the studio. The resulting single, released in the spring of 1954, went nowhere. Nonetheless, Phillips recognized in Moore someone who was both competent and persistent, and when he became interested in developing a raw young singer named Elvis Presley, Sam turned to Scotty for assistance.

Nineteen-year-old Presley happened into Sun Studios to record a birthday tune for his mother. Sensing potential, Phillips called him back for a session, but couldn't match Elvis' vocal style with the appropriate material, and in late June 1954, he asked Scotty Moore to give an evaluation. Moore later recalled of that first encounter, "It

seemed like he knew every song in the world. I'd name a song and he'd sing it, whether it was pop, country or whatever. I noticed that he also had excellent rhythm and timing on the guitar...even in his voice he had great rhythm." Although he was clearly talented, Presley's lack of focus was still a stumbling block, and Moore somewhat tentatively recommended that Phillips try another session, adding Bill Black on bass to make it a trio.

That event, on July 6, 1954, has been described in the decades since as "the big bang" of rock and roll—the instant in time when a new musical style sprang into being. To Moore, the "bang" started out as just another day in the life of a working musician as he, Black and Presley sorted through songs and styles. "We did what we were supposed to do, the three of us," he later recalled. "We played a lot of rhythm, and I was trying to throw in some side notes in there, to make it sound fuller...we didn't have any idea that it was going to be anything special."

The first song recorded was a country ballad titled "I Love You Because." If the session had ended there, Presley would be remembered, if at all, as just another kid with a pleasant, somewhat thin voice singing generic material. But while taking a break, Elvis picked up his acoustic and began messing around with a version of country bluesman Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's "That's All Right Mama." Bill Black spontaneously joined in with a countrified, two-beat bass pattern and Scotty added a fin-

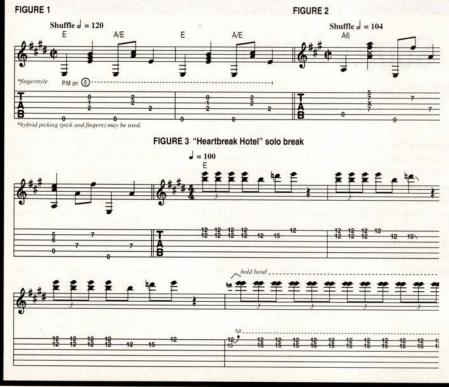
gerpicked rhythm on his Gibson ES-295. When Phillips heard what was developing, he had the trio back up and do it again, this time with tape rolling. One minute and 54 seconds later, the "big bang" was over and rock and roll was on its way.

Legend aside, the bang was barely audible at the time—in fact, according to Phillips, there was no "bang" at all. It would take the Blue Moon Boys, as they became known, another year and a half of recording, performing and local airplay before the *Dorsey Brothers* television show finally exposed Elvis to a mass audience and the shockwave developed. During that time, they melded country, blues, pop and sex appeal into a single, irresistible package. Scotty wove a combination of Travis picking, precise melodic lines and down-home blues licks into his playing, creating the seamless blend that would become known as rockabilly.

During these early days, Moore also functioned as the Blue Moon Boys' manager and all three musicians received cobilling, but before long the stakes outgrew Scotty's handshake approach to business. In late 1955, Phillips sold Presley's contract to RCA, and with the subsequent release of "Heartbreak Hotel" Elvis became a national phenomenon. Simultaneously, a country music promoter named Colonel Tom Parker worked his way into handling Presley's affairs, isolating Elvis from the rest of the band and reducing Scotty and Bill to salaried sidemen.

Musically, however, things were still exciting. The band was expanded to include drummer D.J. Fontana, and the recordings were filled out with background vocals and piano. Having additional musical support allowed Scotty greater freedom as a guitarist. Working from the philosophy that the job of the band was to support and enhance the singer, Moore crafted guitar arrangements that are a marvel of understatement. But when it was time to cut loose, Moore was not afraid to turn up, and his solos on "Heartbreak Hotel," "Baby Let's Play House" and particularly "Hound Dog" crackle with spontaneous energy.

Moore continued performing and recording with Presley both before and after Elvis went into the army in 1958, contributing stellar performances on "Jailhouse Rock," "Too Much," "My Baby Left Me" and many others, and he appeared on screen in some of Elvis' early movies. But while Presley was earning millions, Scotty and Bill could barely pay the rent, and Moore was forced to seek other means of income. His recording experience made it natural to move into the technical side of studio work, first as a part-owner of Fernwood Records (producing one hit,



Thomas Wayne's "Tragedy"), then returning to Sun as a production manager. Bill Black left the band permanently, achieving his own success with the instrumental Bill Black Combo.

In 1964, Scotty attempted to emulate Black by releasing a solo record, The Guitar That Changed the World (a title not chosen by the self-effacing Moore). Comprised of instrumental versions of Blue Moon Boys hits, the record was a commercial flop and Scotty was forced to put his playing career on the back burner. Moving to Nashville, he opened his own studio, Music City Recorders, where he mainly engineered and produced while still playing on occasional sessions for Presley. Bill Black succumbed to a brain tumor in 1965.

In 1968, Presley called on Moore and Fontana to play on his "comeback special," the live-from-Las Vegas television special that would revitalize his career. After the session, Elvis asked Scotty to return to performing, but Moore saw little future in rejoining the Presley empire and the role of the King's guitarist passed permanently to James Burton. In 1973, Moore sold his studio and became a freelance engineer, virtually hanging up his guitar for the next two decades. After joining his old friend Carl Perkins for a few dates in the early Nineties, Scotty finally returned to the studio as a player with the 1997 recording All the King's Men, featuring Moore, Fontana and an allstar cast of disciples that included the Band, Keith Richards, Ron Wood and Jeff Beck. Around the same time, Moore was cajoled by his daughter into writing (with co-author Jim Dickerson) his autobiography, That's Alright, Elvis: The Untold Story of Elvis's First Guitarist and Manager.

A long-deserved measure of peer respect was delivered on March 6, 2000, when Scotty Moore was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, inaugurating the newly created "Sideman" category. Typically, Scotty kept it in perspective, pointing out that he should have been initiated as a member of the Blue Moon Boys-it really was a band, after all.

STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

At the time of the first Sun releases, the power and depth of the recordings led many listeners to assume that there were as many as six or seven musicians involved instead of just the three Blue Moon Boys. Moore's guitar approach



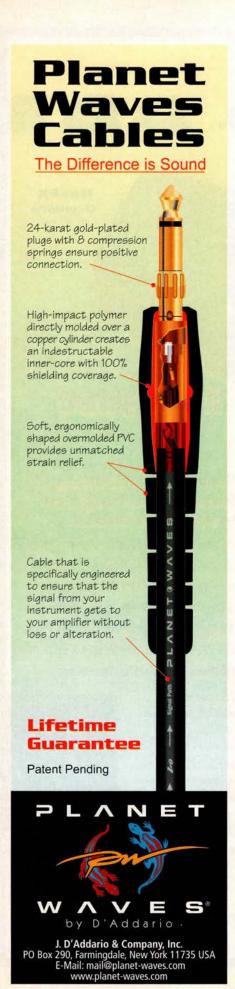
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SCOTTY MOORE

was in large part responsible for the illusion, an improvised blend of rhythm and melody. Moore summed up his style this way: "A lot of it was a combination of old blues licks, some Travis, some Atkins, a combination of thumb and finger—just whatever I could make work, really. I used a thumbpick mostly, then a straightpick on other styles."

The core technique of Scotty's "melodic rhythm" approach is a steady, two-beat bass pattern that can be played using either a thumbpick or hybrid picking, in which the bass notes are flatpicked while bare fingers pick the other notes. FIG-URE 1 illustrates a "train beat" similar to that played by Scotty on "Mystery Train," one of Moore's signature rhythms. Mute the bass strings with the heel of your picking hand, pick the bass notes using downstrokes and pluck the upper notes with the second and third fingers of your picking hand. Start slowly and build tempo.

FIGURE 2 is similar to Scotty's rhythm on "That's Alright Mama"—the right hand principles are the same as for Figure 1, but the melody and bass are a little more elaborate. Listening to each of the Sun recordings in turn reveals more variations on the same basic techniques and shows how inventive Moore was at adapting his approach to different keys, tempos and feels.

Like most country-influenced guitarists, Moore learned that good solos start with a good melody. Many of Scotty's great solos come surprisingly close to restating Presley's vocal line with embellishments around the edges. FIGURE 3 is an excerpt from Scotty's solo on "Heartbreak Hotel."

As you can hear, this break combines the rhythm of the vocal melody with raw rock and roll guitar attitude.

GEAR

Scotty Moore has remained a Gibson user nearly all his life. He briefly flirted with a Fender Esquire solidbody before purchasing a gold ES-295 hollowbody with P-90 single-coil pickups in 1953. This was the guitar he used on nearly all of the Sun recordings. He later traded in the ES-295 for an L-5, a bigger hollowbody instrument that he used until 1957 before switching finally to his signature instrument, the Super 400. Interestingly, his first Super 400, used on "Jailhouse Rock" and numerous other Presley recordings and sold by Moore in the early Sixties for \$80, sold again at auction this year for over \$100,000, several times the lifetime income earned by Scotty from all of his records and gigs with Elvis.

For amplifiers, Scotty first used a tweed Fender Deluxe before purchasing one of the first "boutique" amps in 1955, a Ray Butts Echosonic that allowed him to recreate the Sun sound on stage. Scotty owned the second Echosonic made, the first having gone to Chet Atkins and the third to Carl Perkins.

To recreate his sound you'll want a tube amp, reverb and a delay pedal set for slapback (a single, very short repeat)—but like all the great guitarists, Moore's sound is mostly in his hands.

Heartbreak Hotel

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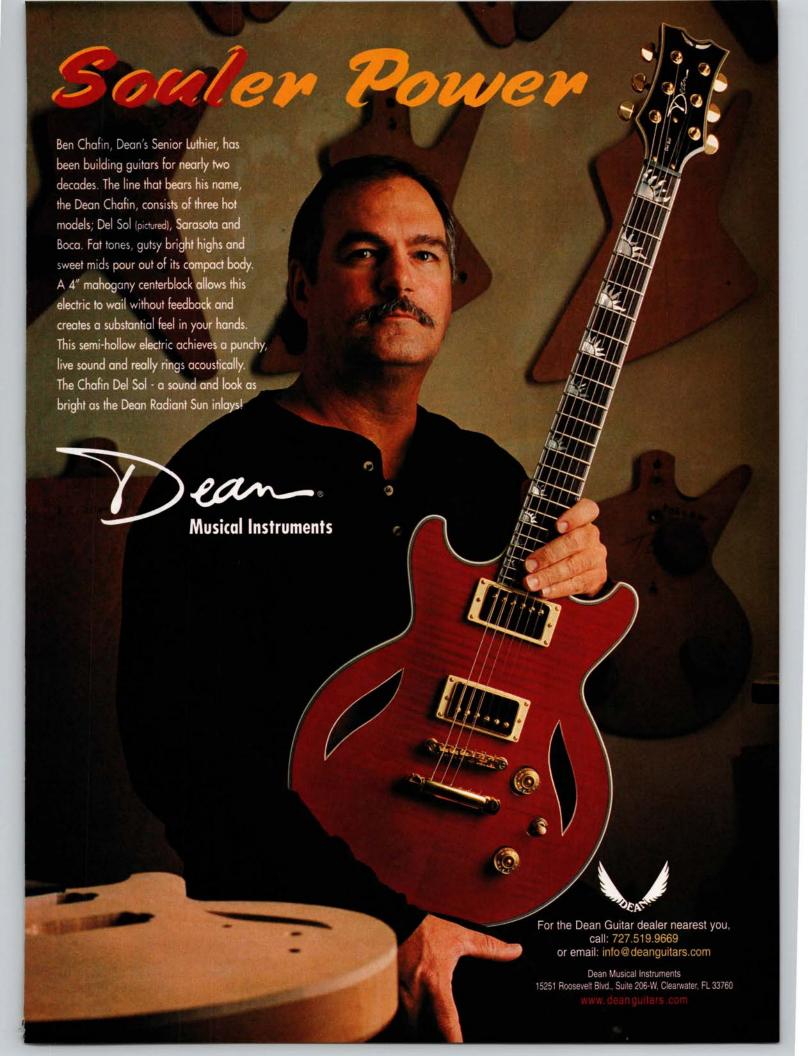
Essential Listening

Elvis Presley records are not hard to find, and a great number of different compilations exist at various prices. The groundbreaking rock and roll guitar of Scotty Moore is most clearly highlighted on the earlier recordings on Sun and RCA, and the two Presley CDs below cover that era well:

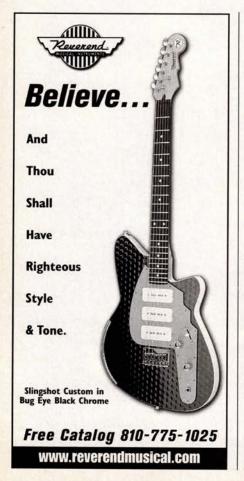
Sunrise (RCA): A complete survey of the Sun era, including the classics, outtakes, alternate takes, Elvis' recordings for his mom, and contemporary live tracks featuring the same material.

Elvis' Golden Records (RCA): The best of the initial post-Sun period, including "Heartbreak Hotel," "Hound Dog," "Jailhouse Rock" and others.

The Guitar That Changed the World (Razor & Tie): A mature, virtuoso performance that puts the focus on Moore's precision playing and lets you hone in on his every nuance.









WILD THING continued from page 64

immortal mating call, "Here I come baby. I'm comin' to gitcha!" From today's post-feminist perspective, it sounds like a line from a bad, "bodice ripper" romance novel. But back in the 1967 pop market, it worked like a charm. Hendrix became a major sex symbol for a new era of freedom, when mixed-race couples were starting—albeit just barely—to gain social acceptance. The standard joke at the time was that girls ventured backstage at a Jimi Hendrix concert in hopes of a sexual encounter, while the boys wanted to meet Jimi and ask him what kind of guitar equipment he used so they could get girls too.

Maybe they weren't focusing on the right equipment, however. Soon a pair of groupies/souvenir collectors called the Plaster Casters would begin amassing molded impressions of rock stars' erect—or, in some cases, semi-flaccid—members. The Plaster Casters' handiwork made it clear that guitar playing wasn't the only area where Jimi dwarfed his competition.

So here was Hendrix—a quiet, gentle guy who just happened to be hung like a cart horse. No wonder he never lacked for girlfriends. But Jimi could also use quietness as a form of passive aggression, as Pete Townshend learned backstage at the Monterey Pop Festival in June 1967. This was the first big gathering of the hippie counterculture, featuring musical artists as diverse as Otis Redding, Ravi Shankar and Janis Joplin. It also marked Hendrix's triumphant return to the States.

"Jimi was on acid," Townshend recalls. "And he stood on a chair. I was trying to get him to talk to me about the fact that I didn't want the Who to follow him onto the stage. I was saying, 'For fuck's sake, Jimi, it's bad enough you're gonna fuck up my life, I'm not gonna have you steal my act. That's the only thing I've got. You're a great genius. The audience will appreciate that. But what do I do? I wear a Union Jack jacket and smash my guitar. So give me break. Let us go on first.' But he was just playing the guitar and ignoring me. I thought he was kind of teasing me. But Brian Jones told me later that he was just fucking completely whacked on acid. So John Phillips [festival promoter and singer with the Mamas and the Papas] flipped a coin and it came down in my favor. I said, 'Right-we're going on first.' But I wasn't angry at Jimi. I loved him very, very much. After Monterey, I got to know him a little in L.A. And suddenly-maybe it was a different bunch of drugs he was using-but he was very, very affectionate and friendly to me."

Ilxis: Bold as Love

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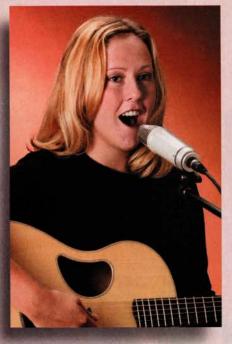
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of Are You Experienced. By December of that same year, the group had emerged with what is arguably the most polished gem in the Hendrix catalog: Axis: Bold as Love. The cover art—gorgeous in its original 12-inch gatefold release format—enshrines Jimi, Noel and Mitch among the many-armed deities of the Hindu pantheon. The serene mood and soothing colors of the artwork reflect not only hippie culture's fascination with Hindu mysticism but also the kaleidoscopic mastery of the music waiting within the sleeve.

Jimi Hendrix blossomed as a songwriter on *Axis*, crafting sardonic little vignettes ("Wait until Tomorrow," "Castles Made of Sand") and conjuring up fantasy worlds of shimmering imagery and prismatic guitar textures ("Bold as Love," "One Rainy Wish"). Axis finds the Experience in top form. Chas Chandler and Eddie Kramer were growing more confident in their production and engineering roles.

"Chas Chandler was definitely in charge of production," Kramer recalls. "Without Chas' help, I don't think Jimi could have done what he did. I think Chas was an unsung hero in the whole career of Jimi Hendrix. He really helped Jimi develop. He was the man with the patience and fortitude to help him with his songwriting, to give him books on science fiction to fire his imagination, and to sit with him day after day in his

apartment and let him be creative. Chas had a vision of what it would take to put Jimi on top, because Chas came from this background of the three-minute pop song with the Animals. In a way, that restricted Jimi. But I think it was a good kind of restriction. Because it forced Jimi to think, Okay, if my ideas are out here—six-feet wide—I have to make them three-feet wide: gather all that information and compact it into a little three-or four-minute piece. That produced some amazing results."

By this point, Hendrix was well into his collaboration with pioneering guitar effects designer Roger Mayer. Kramer cites Axis' "Spanish Castle Magic" as one of the first songs to employ Mayer's Octavia pedal, the primordial octave divider, on guitar:

"Roger was very much a part of what we were doing, whether it was on a daily basis or whether he came in once a week," Kramer notes. "He always had some kind of new box that Jimi was experimenting with. Roger would always be in there with his soldering iron, trying to give Jimi something different, with a bit more of an edge. He was only too willing to experiment. All the wah-wah pedals were highly hot-rodded. The octave doubler, wah-wah, fuzz...they were all very much custom-made for Jimi."

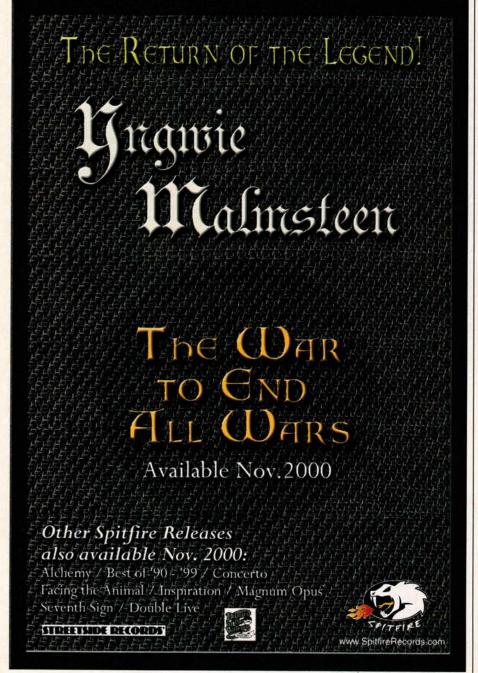
But perhaps Axis' single biggest audio innovation was its brash use of stereo tape flanging. That's the effect that makes the guitar solo coda to "Bold as Love" sound like it's ascending into the stratosphere, bringing the original album release to an appropriately hallucinogenic conclusion.

Electric Eadyland

of Axis proved short lived. Relations within the Experience were growing strained—particularly between Hendrix and Noel Redding, who was beginning to feel under-compensated financially for his work in the band. In January 1968, on tour behind Axis, a heated argument broke out between Hendrix and Redding. Jimi spent the night in a Swedish jail after wrecking the hotel room where the altercation had taken place.

All the touring and rampant drug use were starting to take their toll. Under these strained circumstances, work began on the Jimi Hendrix Experience's third and final album, the epic double-LP *Electric Ladyland*. It took a year to make, which by Sixties standards seemed an unreasonably long amount of time. Just to hedge their bets, the group's record label put out *Smash Hits*, a repackaging of tracks from the first album, combined with the non-album B-sides from the first four singles.

Meanwhile, sessions for what would become the *Electric Ladyland* album moved from Olympic in London across the Atlantic to New York, where the project settled in at



the newly opened Record Plant, the first in a new breed of hip, rock-oriented recording facilities. In the process, Chas Chandler walked out on the project and resigned as Hendrix's manager, frustrated at how much time it was taking to complete the album.

"Jimi was back in his home country and he wanted to stretch out," says Kramer. "He had the success of the first two albums behind him; he loved to jam and party and be creative. But I think the hangers-on became a problem. They became a problem for Chas. And certainly for me. Sessions would be tough because Jimi couldn't say no to his buddies. He invited everybody into the studio. He'd have invited the street sweeper and the cleaning lady and the record company president if he could."

On a few tracks, Hendrix began moving away from the core Experience lineup and instrumentation, adding congas, sax, flute and organ to the album's sonic palette. While Hendrix was generous to a fault-he once gave a Porsche to a casual friend-he was also demanding in the studio. Kramer remembers him losing patience with guitarist Dave Mason, then a member of the successful rock group Traffic, during the tracking session for Hendrix's cover of Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower":

"Jimi had shown the chord progression to Dave, and Dave just couldn't get the damn thing right. And Jimi was yelling at Dave, 'Why are you screwing up, man?' Jimi got very upset, I remember. On most of the sessions I'd done with him, mistakes had been very rare occurrences."

Traffic's leader, Steve Winwood (formerly with the Spencer Davis Group and later to play with Eric Clapton in Blind Faith before going on to a stellar solo career) played organ on the live-in-the-studio "Voodoo Chile," as did Jefferson Airplane bassist Jack Casady. According to Kramer, Hendrix ran into those players at Steve Paul's Scene club one night and brought them back to the Record Plant. (Jazz guitar great Larry Coryell was there too, but declined to play on the session.)

"It was a good example of what I called 'planned jamming,' " says Kramer. "The whole thing wasn't as casual as you might think. Jimi directed everything, saying, 'Here, play this. Do that.' It was all worked out in his mind. He found some great players, and they rose to the occasion."

Electric Ladyland is one of rock's great double albums-a work that shows all of Hendrix's varied musical strengths. There are concise, well-crafted songs in the manner of Axis ("Crosstown Traffic," Redding's "Little Miss Strange," "House Burning Down.") and tight r&b numbers like the Earl King cover "Come On" and the title track, "Have You Ever Been (To Electric Ladyland)." But there are also looser, more jam-based tracks ("Rainy Day, Dream Away," "Voodoo Chile") and wondrous, otherworldly soundscapes, such as the featurelength suite that closes side three: "1983 (A Merman I Should Turn to Be)"/"Moon Turn the Tides...Gently Gently Away." Many of the tracks featured pioneering experiments in stereo panning and 3D audio imaging that greatly enhance the album's overall mood of cross-genre experimentalism.

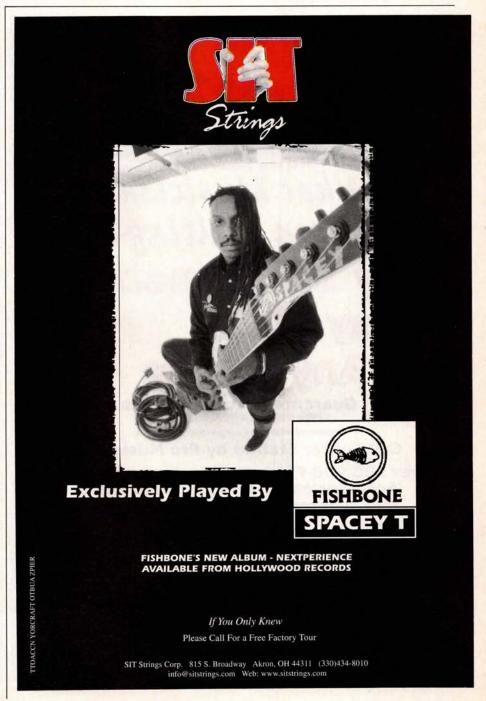
The original album graphics reflected the album's dynamic of pop cohesiveness vs. freeform open-endedness. On the front there was a shot of the Experience in their old Swinging London regalia. The back cover was a grainy closeup of Hendrix in concert,

his face bathed in orange and red hues from the stage lighting, his eyes closed and lips parted as if in mid-orgasm. The gatefold inner sleeve included an abstract prose piece by Jimi, "Letter to the Room Full of Mirrors," written in the free-association style his hero Bob Dylan had used on several of his album sleeves.

In all, Electric Ladyland is a glorious last hurrah for the Experience, who disbanded shortly after its release.

Band of Gupsys

3 Y THE END OF 1969, ALL THE GREAT Sixties rock groups had either broken up or changed direction. The Beatles,



Cream, Big Brother and the Holding Company (Janis Joplin's band), the Yardbirds and Buffalo Springfield had all called it quits. Dylan and the Byrds had gone country. The Stones had quit horsing around with psychedelia and gone back to their bluesy roots. The Who had gone operatic. The Kinks had turned to the British music hall tradition. The Doors were monkeying with saxophones. The Jefferson Airplane had gone political.

The mood of youth culture had shifted dramatically. The hippie thing was over. During a Rolling Stones concert at Altamont Speedway in California, an audience member had been stabbed to death by a member of the Hell's Angels, who had been hired as security guards. Despite protest marches and eloquent outcry against U.S. military involvement in Vietnam, the war dragged on. The anti-war and civil rights movements were turning militant.

In the midst of all this, Jimi Hendrix was trying to forge a new musical identity. As he'd done during the *Electric Ladyland* sessions, he used jamming as a vehicle for exploring new musical directions. In 1969, the Jeff Beck Group played a two-week residency at the Steve Paul Scene club in New York. Hendrix would often jump onstage for an extended encore jam. Jeff Beck couldn't help but notice Hendrix's energy-depleting

lifestyle at the time:

"He did burn the candle [at both ends]. I couldn't keep up. We went out one night, after we'd finished up at the Scene. We'd already played two hours of raving rock and roll, with him coming on for the encore. Then we went to the New York Brasserie to have something to eat. And somewhere else after that. At four a.m. he said, 'Let's go back to the hotel.' I thought, Thank God; he'll fall asleep and I'll go off home. But instead, he'd start playing music and we'd go out somewhere else at five o'clock. This kind of thing was just an everyday occurrence with him. I'd be history for two days afterwards, and he'd still be at it."

Hendrix had begun jamming with his old army buddy Billy Cox. The two had played together in several bands during those duespaying days before Hendrix hit it big in London. Mitch Mitchell had also begun to hang out with Jimi once again. With Cox and Mitchell, Hendrix put together a band called Electric Sky Church (also sometimes billed as Gypsys, Suns and Rainbows), which also included rhythm guitarist Larry Leeds and percussionists Juma Lewis and Jerry Velez. He played several dates with this lineup, including the Woodstock Festival in May 1969. But, much like its name, this collection of players never really jelled. It's no coincidence that Jimi's signature number from Woodstock became his unaccompanied solo guitar performance of "The Star Spangled Banner."

Jimi was happy to reconnect with Cox and Mitchell, but the past was also coming back to haunt him in less agreeable forms. Legal hassles stemming back to the old Curtis Knight days had reared up once again. They proved to be the catalyst for Hendrix's short-lived Band of Gypsys, consisting of Jimi, Billy Cox and former Electric Flag drummer Buddy Miles, who'd also played on Electric Ladyland.

"The deal with the Band of Gypsys was that Jimi had a contractual problem to rectify, and Buddy and I stepped in to help him out," Billy Cox told Guitar World's Andy Aledort in 1999. "Jimi said, 'Man, they're gonna sue me for five million dollars,' or something like that. I said, 'Why don't you give him an album?" [i.e., the proceeds from the sale of the album would be awarded to settle the lawsuit.] A couple of days later Jimi said, 'You're right. Let's give him an album.' Mitch was Jimi's first choice for a drummer. But Mitch was in England. Buddy was readily available."

Entrepreneur Bill Graham booked the Band of Gypsys into the Fillmore East to play four shows—two each on New Year's Eve and New Year's day of 1969–70. These tracks were duly recorded, then edited and mixed at a funky New York studio called Juggy's Sound. Today, Band of Gypsys is hailed as a classic live album, particularly by connoisseurs of



extended guitar improvisation. But in its time, it was not so universally acclaimed. Coming after the carefully crafted Experience studio albums, it seemed a disappointment to many Hendrix fans. The album's rough-edged quality, particularly on the standout track "Machine Gun," did reflect the militant mood of the times, but the Band of Gypsys were simply not as good a live band as the Experience in their prime. While Buddy Miles could lay down a fat groove, he lacked Mitchell's finesse. To many who had followed Hendrix's career since 1967, Band of Gypsys just seemed a throwaway: a hastily assembled live album. Which, of course, is exactly what it was. There are indications that Hendrix himself felt this way.

"I don't know that it was something Jimi liked 100 percent," says Eddie Kramer. "I think he was disappointed in some of the excessive [vocal] warbling of Buddy Miles. There was a tremendous amount of editing done on it. There was a huge amount of jamming and stuff that didn't quite fit on the record. The editing was a little untidy at points. But having said that, I think it's a wonderful example of Jimi being able to play with a reasonable amount of freedom."

The next Band of Gypsys appearance proved to be its last. The group had only gotten to the second number of its January 28 set at New York's Madison Square Garden when Hendrix abruptly announced, "I'm sorry, we just can't get it together," and walked offstage.

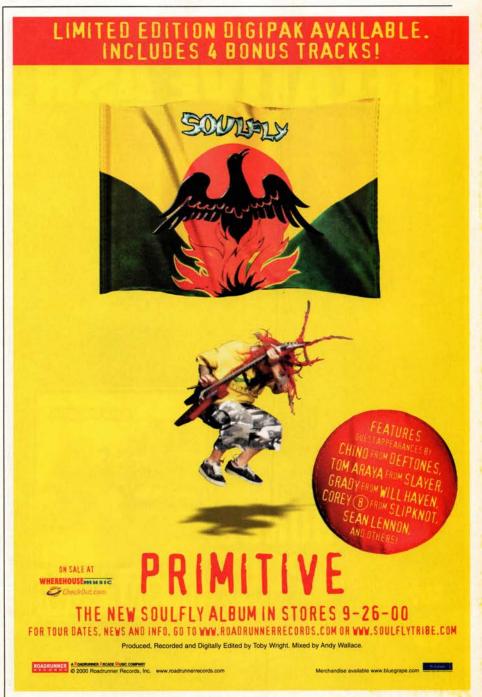
The Try of Love

3 IKE HENDRIX'S EARLIEST YEARS OF LIFE, his final days were fraught with confusion over identity. The dawn of the Seventies turned out to be a tricky time for him. Critics and hipsters were starting to say he'd "lost it." Meanwhile, he was starting to break through to a new audience, but there was a problem there too. While the hippie dream was dead as a doornail, the Woodstock film documentary had finally spread the gospel of long hair, psychedelic drugs and hard, improvisational rock music to the less-urban reaches of middle America and to more-conservative sectors of the youth population. So there was a new bunch of kids clamoring for Hendrix. They were generally a little younger and less "tuned in" than the original Hendrix audience, so they were essentially playing catch-up on the musical developments of the late Sixties. Which means they still expected Hendrix to do the "wild man of Borneo" guitar-humping act that had wowed Swinging London four years earlier. Hendrix was understandably weary of all this and eager to move on to a performance style that was more about music than theatricality.

At the same time, Hendrix was under pressure from militant groups such as the Black Panthers, who'd labeled him a traitor to the cause of black liberation, a sellout to the white world. The dissolution of the Band of Gypsys—Hendrix's only all-black group since his Chitlin Circuit days—certainly didn't help him on that front. It was the beginning of the age of political correctness. Hendrix had been more comfortable during the more freewheeling Sixties, when he could pursue his musical muse unencumbered by political agendas.

"Jimi was frustrated before he died because, I think, the public didn't understand him," says Eddie Kramer. "He was so confused as to which way to go."

In the midst of all this turmoil, Hendrix was pushing himself hard. He was trying to get together a new band and album, and build his own recording studio. The latter was an especially ambitious undertaking for that time period. A few rock stars, like Paul McCartney, Mick Jagger and Pete Townshend, had home studios. But Hendrix was planning something far more elaborate. While construction was underway at Electric Lady Studios-Hendrix's state-of-the-art dream factory down in the heart of Greenwich Village-the guitarist was hard at work on his new album uptown at the Record Plant. An overdub session for the latter-day Hendrix classic "Room Full of Mirrors" left a lasting impression on Carlos Santana. Then a young guitarist whose star was just rising in the wake of Woodstock, Carlos had been



invited to hang with Jimi in the studio.

"They were continuing with what they had been recording the night before," Santana recalls. "It was take 25 or some ridiculous number. And it was 'Room Full of Mirrors.' The amplifiers were facing the control room glass and Jimi was facing the amps with his back to the glass, 'cause he didn't like anybody to see him playing. They rolled the tape and Jimi got on it. The first 10 or 12 bars were like, 'Wow, this is brilliant,' But then he just started going beyond the track—like Sun Ra, Screaming Jay Hawkins and Sonny Sharrock all rolled into one. What he was playing had nothing to do with the track anymore. I could see the engineer and producer look at one

another like, Yeah, better go in there and get him. So two roadies go in the studio. They each grabbed Hendrix by one of his arms and pulled him away from the guitar and amp. And it was like one of those movies where the person's eyes are bloodshot and he's foaming at the mouth. It hit me like it would hit you if you were in the room when somebody was having an epileptic attack. I've heard of drooling when you play a solo, but never going into complete, possessed spasms."

By May 1970, Hendrix had moved his sessions into Electric Lady, working in studio A while construction of studio B was being completed. He only got to make music in the studio he'd labored so hard to build for

three months, from May to August 1970. Tracks he worked on during that period include "Dolly Dagger," "Night Bird Flying," "Straight Ahead," "Astro Man" and the aforementioned "Room Full of Mirrors." The official opening party for Electric Lady was held on August 20. Seven days later, Hendrix flew to London before embarking on some European dates.

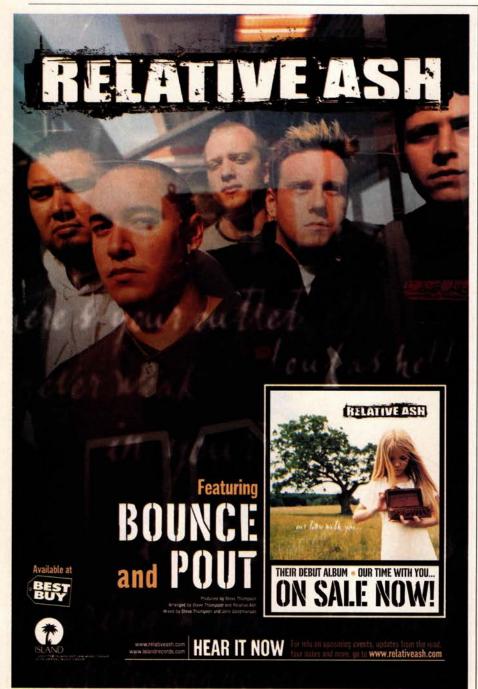
Sad to say, things did not go well in Europe. Billy Cox had a bad acid trip, which left him behaving erratically. Hendrix's own psychological and physical condition was poor as well. He was thin, and patches of premature gray had started to appear in his hair. By several eyewitness accounts, he was out of it on drugs a lot of the time. There were violent incidents in hotel rooms. When a show in Denmark went badly, Hendrix told his audience "I've been dead for years." He was booed in Germany.

Back in London, Hendrix fared better at an informal jam with ex-Animals singer Eric Burdon and his band War at Ronnie Scott's jazz club. It was to be his last public appearance. Two days later, Jimi Hendrix was dead, having choked to death on his own vomit some hours after ingesting a combination of sleeping pills and red wine.

The recordings that Hendrix had been working on just before his death have come out in several forms over the years (see page 68). Audiences at the time first heard 10 of these recordings on the Cry of Love album, released in March 1971. Some of the songs had been mixed when Hendrix was alive. Others had been completed after his death by Eddie Kramer and Mitch Mitchell. Over the following three years, more of the final Hendrix studio tracks emerged on Rainbow Bridge (which included the successful radio song "Dolly Dagger"), War Heroes and Loose Ends. Rock fans at the time were keenly aware that these were pieces of unfinished work by an artist who had been groping for a new direction. All this was well reported in the rock press in the early Seventies. No attempt was made to delude the public-not during this period, anyway.

Given Hendrix's vulnerable psychological state during his final days, his experimental working methods and his general tendency to play life's hand close to the chest, one can only speculate as to how these recordings might have fit into the album that Jimi never got to complete. Today, latter-day Hendrix compositions like "Izabella" and "Ezy Ryder" are analyzed in tones of hushed reverence in the pages of this magazine and others like it. At the time of their release, however, these songs were nowhere near as well known or loved as Hendrix favorites like "Purple Haze" or "All Along the Watchtower."

Jimi would have been glad to see that his last works have come to be so greatly appreciated. That's one pretty safe conjecture.



there was all this powder around...so I got back into gettin' high, and next thing I know I'm playin' this guitar that looks like a, uh, electric can opener. Had to pull the plug on that shit real quick, but by then the record was done. That was, like, it for, uh...ear-bleed.

GW Your last outside work was sessions with John Lee Hooker and Ice-T.

HENDRIX [laughs] Old Johnny Lee. He's amazing. What is he now, eighty-some years old? He's an inspiration to all of us, man. What joins him up with Ice-T is that they're both storytellers. They just tell different kinds of stories.

GW Yeah, but Ice ain't exactly a singer.

HENDRIX Hmmmmm [laughs]...I remember someone else they useta say that about. Bob Dylan, maybe, or Johnny Rotten or [laughs]...some other cat whose name I can't remember right now. [laughs]

GW How'd you get into the movie work?

HENDRIX I did a little thing for Francis Coppola which he stuck into Apocalupse Now, but the first main thing was Ridley Scott, man. I always loved all that sciencefiction and otherworlds and future stuff, you know? And he knew about that. He had this thing happening with Blade Runner, so he got in touch and we did that. I'd spent all this money on Fairlights and Synclaviers and all this [laughs], and the only guys who had that stuff were Stevie and Zappa and Pete and some Greek cat...and me. So I had to do something with it, right? Okay, so we do the movie and, wow, that was a trip. I'd be sittin' there in the studio watchin' all this stuff on a big monitor and kinda jammin' to it on the guitar, and then goin' back over it...and the guitar would be, like, Harrison Ford and then all the stuff on the Synclavier would be, like, the world around Harrison Ford. And then we'd hook it all up to the videotape and sync it, you know, get the SMPTE codes all nice and tight, and then we'd watch it and say, "Does this work?" and if it did we'd keep it and move on to the next part. It was cool because, like, all my life I'd be seein' pictures in my [laughs] expanding head band and tryin' to paint those pictures with music, and now we have some other cat's pictures and then make the sounds which those pictures, like, create and generate. But if the pictures ain't happenin' then there ain't no music...there was one time where I tried to make some music for a picture that wasn't happening and...[groans]...whoah, man. Ain't never doin' that again. [laughs] Not even for Arnie. Eraser? Man, that shoulda been [laughs]...erased.

So anyway, after Blade Runner, James, uh, Cameron called me up to do Terminator...and it sort of went from there, with Spielberg and Quincy on the, uh, movie of The Color Purple. "Purple," man, how could I say no? [laughs] And nobody says no

to Quincy...[laughs] 'cept Michael Jackson. And that was all old-timey stuff—no electric guitar or nothin'. I said "Get Taj [Mahal] or Ry Cooder," but Q just twisted my arm [laughs]...like he does. What else? We got the Batman movie. I said, "Get Prince," but Tim Burton wouldn't take no [laughs] for no answer—and all of that. So we did it together. George Lucas said he was kickin' himself back in the day for not getting me to do some stuff for Star Wars, but I told him that orchestra stuff was right first time. Right now I'm foolin' around with a script based on the old "1983" song...but let's wait and see where that goes.

GW Since this is Guitar World magazine, I

guess I better ask what kind of guitars you playing now? Still with the Parker Fly, I see. HENDRIX You know ol' Pop Staples turned me onto that? And he's even older than John Lee! Yeah, the Fly is cool. I ain't even started figuring out some of the things you can do with the, uh, plastic-acoustic sound, like mixed with the electric and into the Synclavier and all through your molecules and chromosomes and stuff. So I got a few of them, and a Roland-ready Strat for playing, like, trumpets and violins in the distance...and some real old Strats and some new old-type Strats for blues and stuff.

GW You've tried a lot of guitars over the years, haven't you?



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BACK TO GITCHA

HENDRIX Yeah, well...you know how I am, I got to try everything that's out there. Back in the old days I got so sick of the, uh, Strat trem puttin' everything all out of tune whenever I went, like, out there, I got into some Ibanez guitars with those Floyd Rose and Kahler locking-type trems when we were doin' that record...I, uh...[laughs]...can't remember, but they had problems too. Like all those nuts and bolts and knobbles and metal lumpy things stickin' all into your hand when you went to muting. And puttin' them things on a guitar means you got to cut out a big old chunk of the wood, which makes your sound go all thin and puny, and then you got to pump it back up again with all kinds of processors and mutilators and, you know, implements of torture. And then I saw the Steinberger, and it was, like, whoo, man, what is that? It was like playing air guitar but still gettin' a sound, which was kind of cool, but I like to, you know, wrestle with the guitar a little bit. Like when you're makin' love, you need to feel like there's someone there, you know? [laughs] Like, if there ain't anybody there, you ain't makin' love. You're doin'...somethin' else. [laughs]

And next I went to the Paul Reed Smith, which was like luxury. Too much luxury. Too smooth. Too, like, sweet. Like I love to listen to Carlos [Santana] playin' one of those, because bein' smooth and sweet is his thing, and it's beautiful but I need, like, a sharper sound. I might go back to the Strat full time if I can get them to make me some kind of special Strat with a little of that Fly thing built into it. They've been chasin' me for the longest time to do a deal for a signature-type Jimi Hendrix model, and I've always said I just want a good Strat that I can buy anywhere and that anybody else can buy, and maybe this time I'm 'a gonna do it. It's like, no matter how long I stay away from playin' blues, I always got to come back...and I can't stay away from the Strat, either.

GW How about amps?

HENDRIX Well, it used to be Marshall, Fender, Marshall, Fender, Marshall, Marshall and, uh...[laughs]...Marshall. Jeff Beck has this thing where he'll wire together a couple of Marshall stacks for that big grrrraaaaoooooowww thing and a Fender Twin for that clear sharp high end all at once. And Stevie Ray, rest his soul, would have this whole big raggedy pile of every kind of amp you could think of all hooked up together. If your crew don't, like, love you to death, man, there's no way you can keep all that shit workin'. Some of them new ones...I mean, there's so many buttons to push, it's like Star Trek. Phasers on stun, ready photon torpedoes, divert auxiliary power to forward thrusters, ready transporter room three, blah-blah, woof-woof...It was like in the studio you can do all that stuff, you can take forever checkin' stuff out, gettin' every single thing just right. In fact, that's why Chas got pee-ohed with me when we were doing *Electric Ladyland*, and it was part of why Noel got pissed off. But live, man, you just want it to be, like, there, so all you have to think about is...you know, remembering the words and hitting the right notes [laughs]. Well, some of 'em, anyway.

So now I got me this Roland thing for the studio which is, like, every amp in the world [laughs]...and a few that ain't.

You know one thing that was cool? When we got monitors. We had so many live recordings where the band was sounding great, but it was all so loud that I couldn't hear myself singing and... I never had the biggest voice in the world, you know, and when we would hear the tapes back, the singing was like...oh, terrible, man. And I would say, "Oh man, promise me this'll never come out," and, you know, if I'd 'a died back then in 1970 you know it would come out. But then the PA systems got better and you had monitors and you could hear every note you were singin' so nice and clear...made me wish we'd had all that back in the Sixties. I tell you, man, if we had those back then, I'd 'a done "Spanish Castle Magic" live a lot more often. And all the pretty ballads. But since I don't do them big tours no more, all I need is right here. If I jam, I take a Twin or a Bassman and some stompboxes, or I just plug into what's there. When I was a kid and I didn't have no money for nothin' fancy...couldn't even keep my guitar outta the pawnshop sometimes...so I learned to play anything. Any kind of amp, any kind of guitar-right-hand, left-hand, I can work with it.

GW What are you working on now?

HENDRIX You know, it's funny, man. Listening to all that stuff on the box set and the stuff for the second one, which we'll be puttin' out next year...for 2001 [hums "Also Sprach Zarathustra"], made me think about, you know, songs. So maybe I'll do a record of songs next year. Call up Mitch and Bill again. Just like the old days. [laughs] Well, no. Not like the old days. But kinda.

GW Do you miss those old crazy days?

HENDRIX [laughs] No, man. I do not miss that stuff at all. I mean, whatever there was to do, I did it, and it was fun, but that life nearly killed me once [laughs], and after L.A. I decided it wasn't gonna get no second chance. I'm just glad I made it through and got to be...[laughs]...an old man. You know how old John Lee says you never get out of these blues alive? Well, I feel like I did. I'm just grateful, man. Gratefully...[laughs]...undead.

The author would like to thank Ian MacDonald, author of the definitive Beatles study Revolution in the Head, for additional research.

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upon layer of excitement; Jimi keeps turning the musical ideas around and, if you listen closely, you can hear Mitch Mitchell screaming! By the end of that track, you are completely out of breath, only to hear Jimi say, "Okay, let's try it one more time." Ultimately, there were 27 takes of that one song. This is a great example of how Jimi always strove for perfection.

McDERMOTT When you listen to the final master take of "Bold As Love" from *Axis*, it's much more controlled, refined and polished, and each section is carefully constructed. By that point, he'd distilled the essence of the tune down. This version illuminates the development of the tune and

where the ideas came from.

KRAMER The same principle is at work on the intense version of "Little Wing," also from Disc 2, which is "take 1." Here is a much coarser version of the tune—a coarser tone, with much more aggressive playing—which precedes the final master take. The master is one of the most beautiful, gentle recordings Jimi ever made, but this is what led to Jimi's final realization of the tune. Hearing this offers great perspective on Jimi's creative process, as well as offering great, great music to listen to.

GW Some fans wonder why the decision has been made not to re-release all of the original posthumous albums, i.e. *Cry of Love, War*

Heroes, In the West and Rainbow Bridge.

McDERMOTT I understand that attitude, because those were real "records" for many people. Our feeling is that too much time has passed to re-introduce to a significant portion of the fan base records that they never really knew existed. *First Rays* took care of the lion's share of *Cry of Love*, and hopefully more closely respects Jimi's intentions. This set offers more of this great music within a balanced, historically focused presentation.

GW Jimi's re-take on "Stone Free," which kicks off Disc 3 and was recorded with the original Experience lineup, is a significant signpost of the broader arrangement concepts which would come later on tunes like "Ezy Rider" and "Earth Blues," represented on Disc 4.

McDERMOTT Something I find fascinating is that the very first thing Jimi had Billy Cox do when he joined the band was play "Stone Free" along with just Mitch. It's a very interesting and revealing session. You hear Jimi giving some directions to Billy, and you can tell he's measuring the situation and seeing if it will work. Obviously, "Stone Free" was a very important track for Jimi.

KRAMER On that track in particular, one can hear Jimi's uncanny ability to combine rhythm and melody into a single guitar take. He was a freak of nature, but I don't mean that in a derogatory way. He had the incredible ability to think "backward," evidenced by the great backward solos he recorded on songs like "Castles Made of Sand" and "Drifting." When you listen to a lot of the tracks on this set, you can hear Jimi listening and responding to the rhythm section while he, himself, is freely improvising, and is still able to control the situation by directing the band with head nods, eyebrows and facial expressions.

GW A song like "Night Bird Flying," originally from *Cry of Love*, illustrates Jimi's concept of an "electric guitar string quartet," and is brilliant in terms of guitar orchestration. Disc 4 presents a wonderful, previously unreleased, alternate take of this tune.

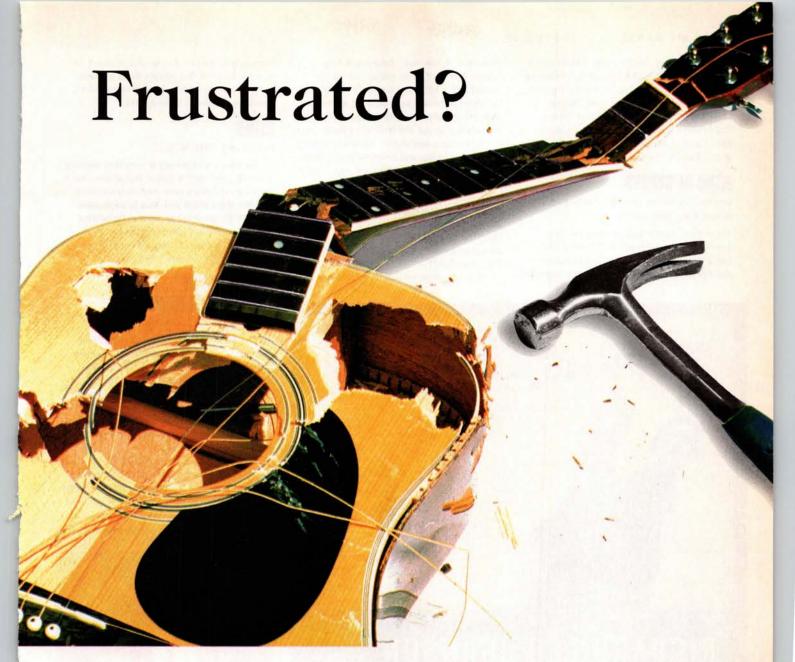
KRAMER That song, to me, well represents where Jimi had arrived, artistically, in the spring and summer of '70. There are so many levels of complexity on that one track alone.

The question always arises, "Where would Jimi have gone had he lived?" and the only thing I can say is that he would have continued to incorporate every damn musical influence that he ever had, and used that as inspiration for new sounds and new music. He was always looking ahead.

GW Do you see this as the first of several more releases like this?

McDERMOTT Well, there's certainly more we could do, I can tell you that. There is a wealth of other material that we can pull from, so there are a lot of very cool things that we can and will do in the future.





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say"); "Rainy Day, Dream Away" and its conclusion, "Still Raining, Still Dreaming," are beautifully swinging hunks of soul/jazz/r&b; the deep, dark, smoldering soul of the slow "Voodoo Chile"; the high-voltage intensity of "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)"; the stunning "Gypsy Eyes"; and, of course, Jimi's profound reworking of Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower."

BAND OF GYPSYS

ORIGINAL U.S. RELEASE DATE: APRIL 1970 (CAPITOL)
REISSUE DATE: 1998 (CAPITOL)

The original Band of Gypsys album is widely revered as the most potent document of Jimi Hendrix's greatness in a live concert situation. Band of Gypsys was recorded as a New Year's Eve

celebration at New York's famed, now longdefunct Fillmore East on two separate days— December 31, 1969 and January 1, 1970, with two shows performed each night. At all four concerts, Hendrix displayed nothing less than pure improvisatory genius and trailblazing fearlessness.

Backed by a new rhythm section consisting of bassist Billy Cox and drummer Buddy Miles, Jimi got the chance to stretch out over intensely soulful, deep-in-the-pocket grooves. Hendrix had left behind the pop leanings of "Foxey Lady" and "Purple Haze" in favor of more complex, ambitious arrangements ("Message to Love," "Power of Soul") and hard-edged political statement delivered as deep blues ("Machine Gun").

Of Jimi's entire catalog, Band of Gypsys has

been outsold only by Are You Experienced, and was one of Jimi's first albums to be certified Gold. Thirty years later, Band of Gypsys still stands as a towering achievement.

BLUES

RELEASE DATE: 1994 (MCA)

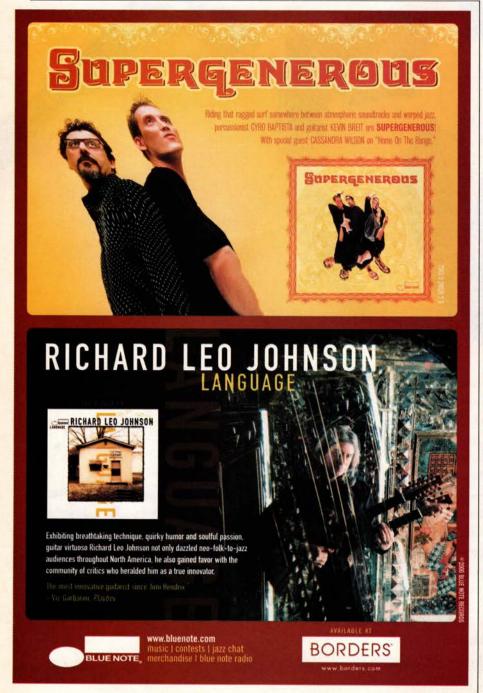
Culled from a wide variety of recording sessions spanning Jimi's entire career, this album clearly illustrates Hendrix's never-ending fascination with the blues idiom and, true to form, showcases Jimi's penchant for constantly twisting the 12-bar concept into an endless array of shapes and sounds. At over 72 minutes in length, there's a lot here to listen to.

FIRST RAYS OF THE NEW RISING SUN

RELEASE DATE: 1997 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

At the time of Hendrix's death, he had been planning to release a double album of all-new material to be called *First Rays of the New Rising Sun*. The majority of the 17 tracks included here were recorded in the summer of 1970 at Jimi's brand-new, state-of-the-art recording studio, Electric Lady, and clearly illustrate that Jimi was in the midst of newfound enthusiasm and creativity.

Following his passing, however, Warner Bros. scrapped the double-album idea and instead opted to spread the material over three separate releases, Cry of Love, War Heroes and Rainbow





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Bridge. First Rays replaces these now-deleted titles in an effort to present the music as Jimi had originally intended.

SOUTH SATURN DELTA

RELEASE DATE: 1997 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

South Saturn Delta presents a large handful of previously unreleased music that Jimi was still in the process of shaping and developing. It also includes some previously released selections that have long since been out-of-print: "Look Over Yonder" and "Pali Gap" were originally issued on Rainbow Bridge; "Tax Free," "Midnight" and "Bleeding Heart" were originally issued on War Heroes; and "The Stars That Play with Laughing Sam's Dice" and "Drifter's Escape" were originally issued on Loose Ends. Each of these previously released tracks has been digitally remastered, and the results are glorious. This is great music, and it never sounded better.

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE: BBC SESSIONS

RELEASE DATE: 1998 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

Recorded for British radio prior to the release of Are You Experienced, these sessions clearly demonstrate the fire and fury of the young Jimi Hendrix. He is clearly out to prove his formidable talents to the world.

On BBC Sessions, all 26 BBC radio tracks plus four tracks from BBC television have been meticulously assembled in a fully annotated two-CD package. Among the additional tracks are alternate takes of "Hey Joe," "Foxey Lady" and "Hear My Train A'Comin'," plus one alternate and one additional take of "Driving South," a powerhouse instrumental that is among the earliest of Jimi's original compositions.

EXPERIENCE HENDRIX: The Best of Jimi Hendrix

RELEASE DATE: 1998 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

When Experience Hendrix, the family-owned company headed by Janie Hendrix, Jimi's stepsister, regained control of the Hendrix catalog in the mid Nineties, the decision was made to scrap all of the previously released "best-of" compilations—Essential Jimi Hendrix, Vol. I and II, Smash Hits and Kiss the Sky—and create a new, improved, all-encompassing release. Experience Hendrix: The Best of Jimi Hendrix succeeds mightily, as 20 of Hendrix's greatest recordings have been expertly remastered and assembled in this beautifully annotated set.

JIMI HENDRIX: LIVE AT THE FILLMORE EAST

RELEASE DATE: 1999 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

In the three decades that followed the April 1970 release of *Band of Gypsys*, Hendrix fans have clamored for more evidence of the group's incendiary performances at the four New Year's shows.

All of that changed with last year's release of Live at the Fillmore East, a two-CD set which

captures the lion's share of the music performed by Jimi, Billy Cox and Buddy Miles on those two legendary nights. Because of a few technical glitches at the time of the event, the audio quality varies slightly throughout the set; but at its best, the sound is spectacular.

As seminal as this collection is, the uninitiated should start with Band of Gypsys. Live at the Fillmore East should then follow soon after.

JIMI HENDRIX: Live at woodstock

RELEASE DATE: 1999 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

The 1969 Woodstock Music and Arts Festival is regarded as the defining moment of the Sixties cultural revolution, and Jimi Hendrix's perfor-

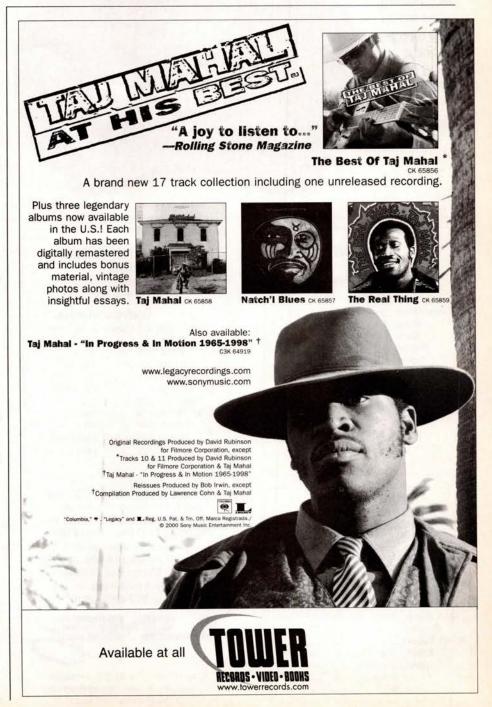
mance there was the event's shining jewel.

Hendrix's shattering, free-form improvisation of "The Star Spangled Banner" is forever frozen in time as a quintessential Sixties "moment." Jimi somehow was able to sum up the violent turbulence as well as the beautiful freedom of the era in a three-and-a-half minute explosion of sound.

Originally released in bits and pieces on Woodstock and Woodstock II, Live at Woodstock presents for the very first time nearly all of the music performed that day by Hendrix and his newly formed, loose aggregation, Gypsys Sun and Rainbows, featuring Jimi and Mitch Mitchell joined by new bassist Billy Cox, guitarist Larry Lee and percussionists Juma Sultan and Jerry Velez.

Aside from the transcendent "Star Spangled

continued on page 198



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SC=single coil pickup

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HEMORRHAGE

by Fuel Transcription on Page 149

ACOU- STIC Tube Preamp	RHYTHM Modern Class A	SOLO Modern Class A
4.5	8	9
9.5	6.5	6.5
9	8	5
10	7.5	9
10	5.5	9
3	n/a	1.5
n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a
	Bridge p/u.	Bridge p/u
	SC	HB
	STIC Tube Preamp 4.5 9.5 9 10 10 3	STIC RHYTHM Tube Modern Preamp Class A 4.5 8 9.5 6.5 9 8 10 7.5 10 5.5 3 n/a n/a n/a n/a n/a Bridge p/u.

RIGHT NOW

by SR-71 Transcription on Page 126

	RHYTHM	LEAD
Amp Model:	Rectified	Brit Hi Gain
Drive:	8.5	9
Bass:	4.5	8.5
Middle:	9	10
Treble:	10	7.5
Ch. Volume:	8.5	9
Reverb:	n/a	n/a
Effect Tweak:	n/a	n/a
Effect:	n/a	n/a
Notes:	Bridge p/u.	Bridge p/u.
	HB	НВ

THE LOST ART OF KEEPING A SECRET

by Queens of the Stone Age Transcription on Page 134

	LEAD/CH.	RHYTHM
Amp Model:	Brit Classic	Small Tweed #2
Drive:	7	6
Bass:	4.5	6
Middle:	9.5	10
Treble:	8.5	10
Ch. Volume:	7	10
Reverb:	n/a	n/a
Effect Tweak:	n/a	n/a
Effect:	n/a	n/a
Notes:	Bridge p/u	Bridge p/u.
	HB	HB

ARE YOU READY?

by Creed Transcription on Page 155

	HEAVY	RHYTHM
Amp Model:	Rectified	Mod. Hi Gain
Drive:	10	6.5
Bass:	7.5	5
Middle:	9	8
Treble:	10	9
Ch. Volume:	8.5	10
Reverb:	n/a	1
Effect Tweak:	n/a	n/a
Effect:	n/a	n/a
Notes:	Bridge p/u.	Bridge p/u.
	НВ	НВ

PURPLE HAZE

by Jimi Hendrix Transcription on Page 144

TREMOLO

	EIIIOEO	
Amp Model:	Brit Classic	Special Notes:
Drive:		Producer
Bass:	1.5	EDDIE KRAMER
Middle:	9	says this alternate version
Treble:	10	was recorded
Ch. Volume:	9	with a Marshall.
Reverb:	2	The overdubbed
Effect Tweak:	n/a	solo uses an Octavia — you
Effect:	n/a	can find a model
Note:	Mid/bridge pickups.	of it on Line 6's DM4 Stomp Box Modeler.

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Special thanks to EDDIE KRAMER for providing earwitness authenticity to the Hendrix settings.

LITTLE WING

by Jimi Hendrix Transcription on Page 13

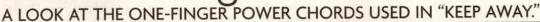
Iranso	cription on Pa	age 139
Amp Model: Drive: Bass: Middle: Treble: Ch. Volume: Reverb:	7 4 9 6.5 6.5	Special Notes: EDDIE KRAMER says Hendrix performed this live version using just an amp and a guitar, with compression and reverb added in the studio. It's likely that Jimi controled the volume from his guitar, rolling it back during the intro and verses.
Effect Tweak: Effect: Notes:		

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PRIMAL INSTINCT

by Tony Rombola of Godsmack

A Bit of Finger





Hi there, welcome to my second column for Guitar World. Last month we went through the main riffs in "Bad Religion" (Godsmack) and, as promised, this time we're gonna do the exact same thing for "Keep Away" (Godsmack). Like I said in my first column, most of our riffs and songs are stripped-down, raw and simple to play, so learning them should serve as a decent introduction to heavy guitar for anyone who's just starting out. As you're about to find out, "Keep Away" backs up this theory 100 percent!

Like most of the songs on our first record, "Keep Away" is in dropped-D tuning (low to high: D A D G B E), so tune your low E string down a whole step to D and leave the other five strings where they are (assuming they're in tune, of course). Just so you know, before I joined this band I'd never even played in dropped-D, and when our singer, Sully Erna, said, "We tune like this," I was like, "What are you doing?!" It was a little weird for me at first, because although I'd used a few alternate tun-

FIGURE 1

moveable"one-finger

All examples are in dropped-D tuning (low to high: DADGBE).

moveable octave shape

FIGURE 2

ings before, I'd never used this one. As soon as they showed it to me, though, I went, "Wow, that makes things real easy because you can play a power chord with one finger!" (see FIG-URE 1). This tuning opened up a lot of doors for me because it suddenly became real simple to slide, hammer-on and pull-off power chords.

I start "Keep Away" using the simple octave shape (**FIGURE 2**) I use in the "Bad Religion" chorus. For the "Keep Away" intro riff (**FIGURE 3**), though, I don't move this shape up or down the neck; it stays where it is, at the D at the 5th fret. This particular riff is real rhythmic and is all about your right (picking) hand—it's one of those parts that just doesn't sound right unless you're nailing the rhythm *exactly*. Once you get it down, you'll know right away because you'll hear the rhythm of the hits. I use alternate picking to play this riff [down-up-down-up "pendulum" strumming: see picking strokes below tablature—GW Ed.].

I strum pretty sloppily when I play this intro figure, so I actually hit almost all the

m = downstroke

(play 4 times)

strings. You can't hear them, though, because they're all muted with my left-hand somehow; all you hear are the octave D notes. Here's how I mute the idle strings when playing this part: the tip of my index finger is lightly resting on the low E, stopping it from sounding; the fleshy underside of the same finger is touching the D string so it doesn't ring when I hit it; and my pinkie is doing the same exact muting thing on the B and high E strings.

The main riff of the song (FIGURE 4) is played using the one-finger power chord shape I was just talking about (see FIGURE 1). In fact, if you wanted to, you could play the whole thing using just one finger! As you can see, this riff features those "easy-to-do" chord hammer-ons and slides I was talking about, too. The song's verse riff (FIGURE 5) is pretty much the same thing except it has a "stop," or rest, in it near the beginning (see bar 1) and a little, percussive "chuck-kah" right before the G5 chord (see bar 2). To do the "stop" I just mute the open strings by lightly resting my left hand's ring and middle fingers on them to stop them from ringing. I do the "chuck-kah" in pretty much the same way too, except this time I strum the muted strings.

As with the intro part, I'm using alternate picking for both of these riffs (**FIGURES 4** and **5**) because playing them this way sounds smoother and more rhythmic than playing them using just downstrokes, especially for the percussive "chuck-kah" in the verse.

The chorus is another real simple riff. For that part I just slide a power chord up and down the neck from D5 at the 5h position (FIGURE 6) to C5 at the 3rd (FIGURE 7) to open A5 (FIGURE 8) to Bb5 at the 1st fret (FIGURE 9).

The middle (interlude) section of "Keep Away" starts with me playing a riff (FIGURE 10) that uses two chord shapes (FIGURES 11 and 12) on the D, G and B strings. All I'm doing to move between them is alternating between the 2nd and 1st frets of the G string with my middle and, index fingers (see fingerings marked under FIGURES 11 and 12). Then, after that riff's built up, I come in with some more octaves (see FIGURE 2) at the 5th, 8th and 10th positions before going into the solo, which we'll cover another time because I'm out of space.

See you next month for some more caveman riffs!

power chord shape using A and G strings ● = root, • = 5th FIGURE 4 "Keep Away" main riff F5 D5 GS (0:10) *Strum first D5 chord on beat I first time only (this chord is tied on repeats) FIGURE 5 "Keep Away" verse riff A65 F5 D5 (0.29) (play 4 times) *Strum first D5 chord on beat 1 first time only (this chord is tied on repeats). FIGURE 8 A FIGURE 9 Bb5 FIGURE 6 D5 FIGURE 7 C5 FIGURE 11 D5 FIGURE 12 D (b5) FIGURE 10 "Keep Away" middle section D(65) (play 8 times)

FIGURE 3 "Keep Away" intro riff

N.C.(D octaves)

KEEP AWAY, by Salvatore Erna

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THE SOUND AND THE FURY

by Kirk Hammett of Metallica

Night in the Ruts

USING PHRASING AND OTHER SIMPLE IDEAS TO MAKE THE MOST OF LICKS AND RUNS YOU ALREADY KNOW.



I started playing guitar after hearing your lead work on Load a few years back. However, I've gotten into a bit of a rut with my soloing lately because I always seem to play the same old licks and runs. A friend of mine says I've got to learn some new scales. Is this true? Please help!

-Matt Fox San Francisco, CA

Some people, like your friend, think that the only way to come up with new soloing ideas is to learn more scales. I definitely don't agree

able to come up with creative and exciting leads. Take for example a standard minor-blues box (FIGURE 1); there are only six different notes in there, but there's so much you can do with them. I always find myself stumbling across different ways to spice up my well-worn blues licks...ways that are often so simplistic. it's unbelievable. In fact, sometimes the thing that makes all the difference is so very basic that if you sat down and deliberately tried to do something different, you'd probably never think of it.

For an example of what I'm talking about here, compare FIGURES 2A and 2B.

(F#). This simple, subtle nuance gives that final note a completely different type of vibrato sound, plus a crying, vocal-like quality that adds emotion to the lick. Now compare FIGURES 3A and 3B. FIGURE 3B is basically the same E minor-blues (E G A Bb B D) lick as the one in FIGURE 3A, with just a couple of trills, double-stops and a slide thrown in for extra excitement. Get the picture? As these two examples illustrate, it doesn't take much to breathe new life into a seemingly tired idea.

A really great and effective way of rejuvenating an old lick is to see how many different

"Some people think that the only way to come up with new soloing ideas is to learn more scales. I definitely don't agree with that. You don't need to know every exotic scale under the sun to be able to come up with creative and exciting leads."

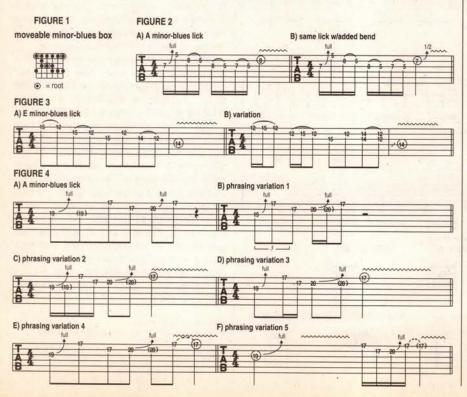
with that. I mean, if that's the case, what happens when you run out of new scales and modes to learn? In my opinion, you don't need to know every exotic scale under the sun to be | the last note (G) from a half step below

As you can see, they're virtually the same A minor blues scale (A C D Eb E G) lick, except that in FIGURE 2B you bend up to

ways you can phrase it. In case you're not 100 percent sure what I'm talking about here. I'll quickly explain: to phrase a run or lick differently, you don't change the order of the notes you're playing; instead you just mess with their timing. Basically, phrasing is all about two things: 1) how you attack each note, and 2) how long before you move on to the next one. Confused? If you are, don't worry-the following example should make this concept crystal clear.

Check out the simple A minor-blues lick shown in FIGURE 4A. By keeping the running order of the notes the same and merely changing the timing of each note, you can come up with a bunch of variations in no time. FIG-URES 4B-F are just a few of 'em. Get it? It's real easy to do, and those five variations we've just looked at are just the start. There are literally an infinite number of ways this short sequence of notes can be phrased without altering their order or adding extra slurs or

So, the next time you find yourself guilty of recycling the same exact licks over and over again, try taking a few of them and seeing how many different ways you can phrase them. I realize that this is an unbelievably basic concept, but then again, most of the great ones are-and for that very reason, are often overlooked. Don't dismiss this one-it could well save your ass the next time you find yourself caught in a "lick recycling" rut! @



WILD STRINGDOM

by John Petrucci

Images & Words...And Guitars

PRESENTING THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF JOHN PETRUCCI'S

NEW GUITAR WORLD COLUMN.

Hi everyone! First off, it's great to be back as a columnist for *Guitar World*. I'd also like to thank all the readers and fans for their support, especially those who have written to the magazine expressing interest in seeing more columns.

Since my last column a few years back, I've been keeping myself very busy. We recently released *Metropolis*, *Pt. 2: Scenes from a Memory*, and have been touring the world to support it. (More on this later.) I've also recorded a couple of albums with my side project Liquid Tension Experiment (featuring Tony Levin on bass, Mike Portnoy on drums and Jordan Rudess on keyboards), as well as doing other projects (for a full discography, you can go to my website www.johnpetrucci.com).

I'm very excited to be involved in designing my new signature guitar for Ernie Ball/Music Man. I know some of you will be interested in this guitar, so I'm going to give you a sneak preview right now. directly into the board and the electric pickup output into my rig, which has a volume pedal. When I use the acoustic sound during the verses, I keep the volume pedal off. Then if I need to add a fill, I give the volume pedal some gas, which allows a smooth distorted electric signal (from the regular pickups) to fly in seamlessly for the fill. When the fill's over, I ease off the volume pedal, and my delay for the electric signal trails over. Then I'm back to the pure acoustic sound again. The cool thing about this setup is that it eliminates having to have an acoustic guitar on a stand and then going back and forth between it and an electric.

Another design change is in the bridge itself. I've always used a Floyd Rose-style bridge, but on this guitar I have a Music Man floating bridge without the locking nut, but with locking tuners. One important change we're implementing in this bridge is making all the edges very smooth and rounded, especially the saddles. This will help eliminate

We also wanted to tie in musical and lyrical themes from our previous album, Images and Words. Here's why: As this album is titled Metropolis: Part 2, it's actually a continuation of our song "Metropolis-Part 1 'The Miracle and the Sleeper' " from Images and Words. We treated this album as sort of a sequel to the original "Metropolis." As such, we naturally wanted to include musical references, and even direct quotes, from the original. We'd experiment with lifting riffs from "Metropolis-Part 1" and playing them verbatim, but more often we'd change the orchestration, the feel or the time signature of the riff. For example, I might try grabbing a vocal melody from "Metropolis-Part 1" and arrange it on the guitar.

We tried to structure *Metropolis Pt.2* so that it feels like a complete statement, not just a bunch of songs. In fact, we built it as if it were a single song, complete with a thematic beginning, middle and ending, and with

"We wanted to highlight the songwriting, but the crazy instrumental stuff had to be in there too."

When designing this guitar, I added some new features, but I also retained the ones I like and am used to. I love having a classic two-humbucker configuration, so I kept that. You see, I don't like having a center pickup, because it always gets in the way when I pick. I never liked pickup mounting rings either, and don't have them on this guitar. That's because when I play, I keep my pinkie on the bridge pickup, using it as a "guide," and I can't do that comfortably if there are pickup mounting rings. I also have the pickups wired so that the center position of the toggle switch engages the two inside coils of the humbuckers. This sound is particularly cool because it produces a nice clean tone with the midrange scooped out.

Now for the new features: I've put in a Fishman piezo pickup system in the bridge, which produces an acoustic guitar—emulating sound. There's an extra knob on the guitar that selects between the regular pickups and the piezos. This system also has a stereo output with two output jacks (one for the regular magnetic pickups and one for the piezos). You can run both outputs separately or blend them together (as I do on "The Spirit Carries On," from *Metropolis*). When recording an acoustic sound, I usually go direct into the board using the piezo output, and it sounds amazing.

Here's how I've been using the Fishman system live: I run the acoustic pickup output

friction, thus keeping the guitar more in tune and preventing string breakage. We've also come up with a great, simple way to adjust the truss rod—you simply turn a little wheel that's completely accessible. No more gouging the wood on your guitar with a screwdriver.

I'm still working on the neck shape, but the body is very contoured—comfortable and balanced. There will also be very cool inlays on the guitar neck. If you remember, my Ibanez had a wild Picasso-like graphic on the body. On this guitar, the graphics will be featured more on the fingerboard.

A look at Metropolis, Pt.2: Scenes from a Memory

Metropolis, Pt. 2 is a very special album to Dream Theater and to me. We're very excited about it because this is the first time we kept the production duties within the band. Drummer Mike Portnoy and I produced it, and though it was challenging to do, it was extremely rewarding. We got to do our new record on our terms.

When we started recording this album, we tried to write something that was from start to finish a conceptually cohesive idea. Our goal was for the whole record to flow thematically, yet retain all the elements that our music is known for. In other words, we wanted to highlight the songwriting, but the crazy instrumental stuff had to be in there too.

all the emotional peaks and valleys that a song has. To take this concept even further, if you listen to the way the original "Metropolis" was structured, it had an introduction, a vocal section, a long instrumental section and then another vocal section. This new album does the same thing: it has an introduction followed by vocal songs; then it has a really long instrumental song followed by more vocal songs. So, formwise, the whole album models itself after the original "Metropolis-Part 1."

Even as we were referring back to the original "Metropolis—Part 1" to restate certain themes and lines, the main thing we wanted to do was maintain continuity throughout the record. By that I mean, if you heard a riff or a chord progression in the beginning of the album, you might hear it again later on in the album. This is kind of like the Who's *Tommy*, where recurring themes pop up throughout the record.

Over the next few months, I'll be dissecting our new album for you. I'll try to give you insight not just on guitar technique (though there will be plenty of that) but also on songwriting and production. I'll also explain my thought process behind a lot of the guitar parts. Next month, I'll compare some similar parts from Images and Words and Metropolis: Part 2, and also show you specific examples of thematic continuity that appear throughout Metropolis: Part 2. See you then.

RIFFER MADNESS

by Dimebag Darrell of Pantera

Ride the Lightning

THE SECRETS TO PLAYING "GODDAMN ELECTRIC": PART 1

INTERVIEW BY NICK BOWCOTT

Guitar World is pleased to announce that Pantera guitarist Dimebag Darrell has returned as a columnist. To kick off another series of Riffer Madness, we caught up with Dime at this summer's Ozzfest and asked the goateed axeman to show us the proper way to play "Goddamn Electric," the latest single from Pantera's Reinventing the Steel (Elektra).

GUITAR WORLD Back in our May 2000 issue you told us that, like the majority of songs on *Reinventing the Steel*, "Goddamn Electric" is played on a guitar tuned one whole step down (low to high: D G C F A D) from regular, "concert" (A=440 Hz) pitch. Yet, when I tune my guitar that way, I'm definitely not *exactly* in tune with the record. I've checked my tuner and it isn't broken, so what's the deal?

DIMEBAG DARRELL Here's the scoop: we're already down something like a quarter step to begin with. Because of this, when we tune to E we're really just a hair sharper than D#. So, when we tune down a whole step to D, we're

really nearer to C#. Besides sounding real heavy, the cool thing about this tuning is that your guitar feels totally different—the strings get real loose and spongy. This means you can get some killer wide vibrato happening and do some really big-assed bends too. [Technical Note: To clarify Dime's tuning quirk, we consulted with his long-serving guitar tech, Grady Champion. "To us, E is really D# plus 40 cents on the Korg DTR-1 (digital, rackmount) tuners we use," Grady confirmed. "So, D is really C# plus 40 cents, G is really F# plus 40 cents, and so on." Also, in this tuning, Dime uses the following string gauges (high to low): .009 .011 .016 .028 .038 .050—GW Ed.]

GW The intro riff to "Goddamn Electric" [FIGURE 1] is relatively easy to play.

DARRELL Like I've said before, sometimes even the simplest shit can be real bad-assed...as long as it's played aggressively. It's all about attitude, man—it's all about playing it like you mean it.

GW The quick, one-fret slides you do when the riff moves to F5 (bar 3 of FIGURE 1)

really add to the intro's aggression.

DARRELL Sure, sliding from one power chord to another can definitely help a riff sound more sinister. I got the idea from listening to Tony Iommi of Black Sabbath, and I do it a lot. I mean, check out how that part sounds if you take the slides away [**FIGURE 2**]; it looses a shitload of aggression and vibe.

GW The verse riff [FIGURE 3] features both your patented "long-assed slides" and an inverted power chord [the D#5/A# shown in FIGURE 4]. Do you have any advice on how to consistently nail those slides?

DARRELL There are two things you've always gotta remember when doing real long slides like these. First, you've gotta let off the strings a tad with your left [fretboard] hand and just let 'em slide under your fingers; if you press down real hard on the strings when you're doing a long slide up or down the neck, it probably won't come out right.

The other thing to remember when you're sliding a long way is this: it's the destination that's important, man. It doesn't really matter how you get there or where you start the slide; the trick is knowing where to stop and making sure that you don't get there too early or too late. So keep your left hand loose, use your ears and eyes and, with a bit of practice, you'll be nailing long-assed slides like the ones in the "Goddamn Electric" verse every time.

GW The way you use the dissonant minor ninth [E and F] and major seventh [E and D#] intervals in the pre-chorus riff [FIGURE 5] is really effective in building tension.

DARRELL All I'm doing there is chugging on the open low E string with three different notes on the A string. There's a cool tension on either side of the E, though. I'm using all downstrokes to play this riff, too. Whenever possible, I like to play palm-muted chugs like these using all downstrokes for maximum heaviness and chunk.

Check out the chorus too, man [FIGURE 6]. Once again, it's long-assed slides, but this time there's a bend on the end of each one. What I'm doing for the most part in this riff is sliding octaves on the A and G strings up to either F or D# and then bending both notes in each octave sharp and sour.

GW Exactly how far are you bending each octave pair—a quarter tone?

DARRELL I have no goddamned idea, bro! [laughs] Listen to the album and use your ears, man...they'll tell you when you're bending 'em just right!

FIGURE 1 "Goddamn Electric" intro

Guitar detuned slightly lower than one whole step (low to high: D G C F A D, tuned slightly flat)
All notes and chords sound one whole step lower than written, slightly flat (see lesson).



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by Jimmy Brown

Getting Your Axe Together, Part 2

CHANGING STRINGS



 Remove the old string, being careful not to prick your finger or scratch your guitar's finish. Wrap the old string securely into a loop (the same way it comes out of the package) and safely dispose of it.

2) Thread the new string through your guitar's tailpiece and/or bridge (make sure you have the right string and are threading it through the right slot!), then guide it up to the string post, being careful not to put a kink in it. (A kink in the "speaking" length of a string—the part between the bridge and nut—will prevent it from vibrating correctly, while a kink at any point along the string between the ball-end and post may cause the string to break at that point when straightened and tightened up to pitch.)

3) Rotate the tuning peg until the hole in the string post is parallel to the frets. Now take up any slack in the string, making sure it is sitting in the proper bridge and nut saddles (and lined up under the corresponding string tree, if your guitar has them), and wrap it around the tuning post from the side opposite the tuning peg. (The string's speaking length should always be on the opposite side of the post from the tuning peg.)

4) Keeping the string moderately taut with both hands, wrap it around the post one and a half times (the second turn should be *above* the first), then thread the tip of the string through the post hole from the side facing the tuning peg. (Some players thread the string through the post hole first, then wrap the slack around the post by hand. This is not a good idea, as doing this may distort the windings of the wound strings or create an insufficient angle for the string to pass over the nut.)

5) Guide the string through the post hole and pull it as tight as you can. Here's the most important step—the one that will keep the string from slipping out of tune: bend the loose end of the string at a right angle and slightly downward immediately at the point where it emerges from the hole. You can now let go of the string.

6) Tune the string up to pitch using an electronic tuner. If you don't have one, match the pitch to the corresponding note on a keyboard, pitchpipe or tuning fork. Unwound strings will require a few more turns than wound strings. (Use a stringwinder to save yourself time and effort.)

Repeat steps 1-6 for the remaining strings.

Once you've loaded all your new strings, you'll want to either cut them close to the posts with wire clippers or curl them tightly with a hard object the same way you would curl a piece of ribbon when wrapping a gift. Do not leave the long, straight, loose ends of the strings dangling. Not only do they look like crap, they also get in your way and present a very real and dangerous hazard to your (or someone else's) eyes! If you decide to clip them, be sure the sharp, blunt tips aren't sticking up. The last thing you need is a nasty little puncture wound on the tip of one of your fretting fingers.

The next order of business is to stretch those new strings to take up the inevitable hidden slack, which, if not dealt with right away, will plague you for more than a few minutes of playing time and force you to retune repeatedly. The quickest way to do this is to gently tug on each string for a few seconds, grabbing it around the 12th fret and pulling it away from the fretboard. Be careful not to yank the string much more than an inch away from the fretboard, as this could cause it to break or, if the string is wound, cause the winding around the core to distort, which could impair your tone.

A guitar string basically has three stages in its life cycle. When it's brand new, it's very elastic and sounds bright and fresh, but until it settles, it will slip out of tune. The second phaseafter you've stretched it and played it in for a while—is when the string is at its optimum. How long it stays like this depends on a variety of factors, such as how much and how aggressively you play, how much you sweat, how much humidity the string is exposed to and how much dirt and rust accumulates on it. When a string becomes dirty and rusty it loses its tonal brightness and physical elasticity, making it much more likely to break. If a string sounds dull and feels and looks dirty, it's "dead" and should be replaced. Likewise, a string should be replaced if you feel dents in it when you run your finger up and down it on the side that touches the frets, as these bumps can prevent it from vibrating correctly and generating the desired harmonic overtones.

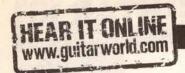
Here are some simple things you can do that can help extend the life of your strings:

- ·Wash your hands before you play.
- •Wipe your strings (including the side that touches the fretboard) with a clean, lint-free cloth after each playing session.
- Keep your guitar in its case when you're not playing it, especially if you live in a humid climate.

improperly setup guitar (won't play in tune even after carefully tuning each string with a good electronic tuner, feels and/or sounds less than pleasing). So, have you determined if your instrument is setup properly and "optimized" to your liking? If you haven't, this matter should be your top priority before going any further. If you're not sure that your instrument is in good working order and are anything less than inspired by the way it feels and sounds, do not hesitate to bring it to your local professional guitar tech or luthier for an evaluation. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for your guitar to be intonated well and have its neck and action properly "focused" (micro-adjusted). Its nut, bridge, frets and tuners should also be in good shape, and all its miscellaneous hardware and electronic components should be properly positioned and fully functional. But remember, don't attempt any major adjustments or repairs yourself unless you're qualified

As you may recall from last month's column, I mentioned that we'd begin this month's installment by covering various ways to tune your guitar by ear. But I've since realized that we need to address a few more fundamentals before tackling this topic. First, you need to make sure your axe is always strung with a relatively fresh set of strings because, as I mentioned last month, dirt and dents prevent a string from vibrating correctly. Fresh strings also sound a lot brighter and generate harmonics better than dirty, rusted ones (very useful for tuning; more on this later).

It's important that your strings are properly "loaded" (installed) before tuning them up to pitch because an improperly loaded string can cause problems with tuning, sustain and breakage. A string that's not wrapped around its tuning post correctly can slip out of tune, become tangled, rattle at the nut or have its winding distort, which can affect the way it vibrates. Being able to change strings efficiently is the most fundamental aspect of guitar maintenance that every player should know. Of course, different types of guitars have different hardware configurations, some requiring different procedures for loading and locking strings. For example, if your guitar has a Floyd Rose tremolo bridge, your strings can't have ball-ends on them. The type of tuners on your guitar also determines how the strings should be loaded. I've found that, out of all the different tuner designs on the market, locking tuners, such as Sperzel's Trim-Loks, are the most efficient for tuning stability and the most convenient for changing strings in a hurry (no tools required).



PERFORMANCE & ANALYSIS



How to play this month's songs

SR-71

"Right Now"

Throughout "Right Now," SR-71 guitarists Mitch Allan and Mark Beauchemin employ strummed octaves in their rhythm parts. Today's guitarists favor strummed octaves in their arrangements because they really "cut"—they're not as dense (and potentially muddy-sounding) as power chords, but they're sonically thicker than single lines.

An octave is comprised of two notes 12 half-steps apart (or 12 frets away on the same string). These two notes share the same letter name and the same pitch class; the only difference is that they're played in a different register. For example, an E octave is made up of two E notes with the second note played 12 half-steps (six whole steps) higher.

In order to play the strummed octaves in measures 2-8 correctly, fret the lower string with your index finger and the higher string with either your ring finger or pinkie, while simultaneously muting the idle middle string with the fleshy underside of your index finger. Make sure you strum the fretted notes with a single downstroke, as if you were playing a power chord. It's also imperative that you mute the rest of the strings not being fretted with the other fingers of your left hand to prevent any unwanted notes from ringing.

Beauchemin's solo (beginning at rehearsal letter F) is full of quirky ideas. He begins with a phrase using open-string pull-offs-where he pulls off from single fretted notes to the open high E string. This technique enables him to achieve a smoother and more fluid rhythmic feel than he'd be able to get if he picked every note.

When executing pull-offs, make sure you pull the string slightly sideways (toward the palm of your picking hand) just before you lift your finger off the string. This motion will keep the string vibrating and is essential in order to allow the open-string note to ring out. If you simply lift your fretting finger off the string without pulling, you won't hear the open-string note and the lick won't work.

In measures 87-89, Beauchemin plays a flashy lick that combines hammer-ons and pull-offs. The easiest left-hand fingering to execute this lick is to fret the E at the 12th fret with your index finger; then hammer-on to the 14th fret with your middle finger and to the 16th fret with your pinkie. When pulling off, make sure you use the same technique described in the previous paragraph; the only difference is that here you'll be pulling off to the E note at the 12th fret.

Don't press down too hard on the strings

when executing the slides in measure 80. The harder you press, the more friction you'll produce, causing the slides to sound "forced." It sounds like Beauchemin played these slides fairly off-the-cuff when he recorded his solo, producing a very relaxed, melodically slinky passage. Try to capture his vibe by targeting, and really nailing, the note being slid to, without worrying too much about forcefully fretting the notes you're sliding from.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

"The Lost Art of Keeping a Secret"

"The Lost Art of Keeping a Secret" has a funky groove that is propelled by guitarist Josh Homme's straight-ahead power chords throughout the song. His parts shouldn't be too hard to execute. Just keep in mind that wherever there's an open string interspersed in the rhythm parts (as in measures 5 and 9-10), simply lift your fretting hand lightly and pick the open string. Don't accent the notes on the open strings or focus on them, because they're really not essential to the rhythm part. These are just passing notes that Homme throws in to make the groove funkier. In fact, you can play the parts without the open strings and it will sound just fine.

During his solo (see rehearsal letter G in the transcription), Homme employs a technique called unison bending. This is a maneuver whereby you strum two notes on adjacent strings, then bend the note on the lower string up to match the pitch of the higher note.

In order to play unison bends in tune, you'll need to listen to the pitches of the two strings very carefully to determine how much "push pressure" you'll need to apply to the string you're bending. This gets a little technical, but the thing you need to listen for is what's known as a beat frequency, which is a pulsating sound (also known as a "beat") that results from two pitches being slightly out of tune with each other. The closer in tune the two pitches are, the slower the beat or pulse. And when two pitches are perfectly in tune, there is no pulsating/beating whatsoever—just a pure, knife-edge tone.

When playing the unison bends in the solo, use both your middle and ring fingers to bend the lower notes. This reinforced fingering will provide you with more strength with which to push the string and enable you to control the pitch of the bend more easily. FIG-URE 1 is a little etude featuring unison bends for you to practice. To hear a true master of unison bending, check out Jimi Hendrix's solo on "Manic Depression."

JIMI HENDRIX

"Little Wing"

Though Jimi Hendrix is generally lauded for his incendiary lead playing, he was also one of the greatest rhythm guitarists who ever lived. His idiosyncratic and groundbreaking rhythm style is easy to imitate but almost impossible to duplicate.

Hendrix was the master of chordal embellishments-the adding of color tones to major and minor triads. One of his favorite moves was hammering-on notes while holding down chord fragments. He instinctively knew that using hammer-ons to embellish chords can make even the most ordinary progression sound fresh and powerful.

Jimi loved to hammer-on from the second to the major third, creating, in effect, a sus2-3 resolution. You can hear Jimi execute this move brilliantly in measure 12, as he hammers-on to B from the A on the 3rd string. In order to really cop Jimi's vibe, grab the root note (G) on the low E string with your thumb and fret the A on the 2nd fret of the G string with your index finger and the D on the 3rd fret of the B string with your middle finger. Next, hammer-on to the 4th fret of the G string with your ring finger. Let the notes ring into each other for optimum effect.

Hendrix also used this hammer-on approach to play other embellishments as well. For example, during the intro to "Little Wing" (measure 2), he embellished the G chord two other ways: by hammering-on the fourth (C) from the third (B), and by hammering-on the ninth (A) from the root.

Over minor triads, Jimi loved to hammeron from the lowered third to the fourth, and from the fourth to the fifth, often within the context of the same phrase. You can hear him do this over the Em7 chord in measure 4, as he hammers-on from the G to A and, later, from A to B. He also favored hammering-on to the lowered seventh from the fifth, and from the lowered seventh to the root. You can hear Jimi do both of these over an Am chord in measure 13.

The best way to begin understanding Jimi's hammer-on approach is to take a stock barrechord shape and start figuring out which embellishments sound best. Try to visualize the complete chord shape in your mind's eye, even if you are just playing fragments of it. This will give your hand a concrete point of reference.

IIMI HENDRIX

"Purple Haze"

As noted in the "Little Wing" analysis above,

Hendrix favored using his thumb to fret root notes on the 6th string. This freed him to add melodic embellishments (such as fourths, sixths, lowered sevenths and ninths) to the basic triad, while omitting the fifth in the lower register for a cleaner, tighter sound. For example, instead of playing stock barre chords in measures 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 of "Purple Haze," Hendrix fretted the roots of the G and A chords with his thumb. Though this contradicts "proper" guitar technique (which suggests that the thumb should be anchored behind the neck at all times), it certainly underscores the notion that rules are made to be broken.

If you're not used to fretting chords in this manner, it may be a little frustrating at first. When attempting this technique, it's important that you don't over-reach with your thumb—just hook it over the guitar neck enough to grab the low E string (and lightly touch the A string), at the same time allowing ample room for your other fingers to grab the remaining notes of the chord. If you hook your thumb over too much, you won't be able to fret the other strings, so experiment with different hand postures and find a grip that's comfortable for you.

Jimi's solo (featuring an effect called an Octavia, which in essence generates an octave above certain notes) is constructed using a

hybrid of the E Mixolydian (E F# G# A B C# D) and the E Dorian (E F# G A B C# D) scales. An easier way for you to look at it is that Jimi's playing an E minor pentatonic scale and adding the second/ninth (F#), major third (G#) and sixth (C#). FIGURE 2 depicts a well-known fingering pattern for the E minor pentatonic scale. Look at FIGURE 2A to see where the added notes lie in the "box." As you can see, they fit very well in the fingering pattern and add wonderful color to the basic minor-pentatonic sound. In FIGURE 3 I've written a line using this hybrid "Mixo-Dorian" scale to demonstrate its colorful sound.

Keep in mind that all these are merely brief glimpses into Jimi's deeply influential style. For an in-depth study of Hendrix's most notable solos and rhythm parts, I recommend that you pick up Andy Aledort's book Jimi Hendrix Signature Licks: A Step-by-Step Breakdown of His Guitar Styles and Techniques (published by Hal Leonard).

FUEL

"Hemorrhage"

Using open strings is a great way to add texture and atmosphere to any chord progression. By adding the open G and E strings to a simple B minor chord grip and holding this shape over a descending B-A-G-A bass line in "Hemorrhage," Fuel guitarist Carl Bell cre-

ates a G6maj7/B-G6maj7/A-G6maj7 progression that *sounds* sophisticated but is really easy to play.

When you're playing chords in a band, you can do one of two things: support the rhythmic foundation by strumming and keeping time, or create motifs with chords, producing a sense of *melodic movement*. Open-string chords instantly allow you to do the latter. The sheer nature of these voicings, with their ringing, sustaining quality, enable your rhythm parts to sound "bigger"—more anthemic and melodic.

Want to know a remarkably easy way to add dimension to your chord voicings? Just lift your index finger off of the B and E strings (allowing them to ring out) when playing a major barre chord. Adding nothing but the open E and B strings to a major barre chord will drastically change its makeup and expand its harmonic function. Plus, as an extra bonus, not having to barre the chord makes it easy to finger.

Bell uses this exact approach in measure 36. Instead of playing a regular F# barre chord, he lets the B and E strings ring out, creating a very cool-sounding F#7add4 voicing. Experiment moving this shape up the neck and see what other great voicings you'll stumble upon.

CREED

"Are You Ready?"

Guitarist Mark Tremonti demonstrates his inventiveness in this song by using an unusual open D5 tuning (low to high: D A D A D D) to create lush, droning chordal textures, dramatic octave motifs and harmonious chord-melody riffs. Using this tuning enables Tremonti to easily finger strummed octaves at the same fret on strings 2 and 4, or 3 and 5, while allowing the remaining open D and A strings to ring, creating exotic, sitar-like riffs, à la Jimmy Page.

You'll notice that we've arranged Tremonti's mandolin parts here for guitar, using the same open D5 tuning and a capo at the 12th fret. Most solidbody electric guitars should be able to accommodate a capo this high up the neck, though the tuning of the strings may need to be tweaked somewhat to compensate for the capo's tight clamping against the fretboard. If you're going to play these parts (labeled Gtr. 3), be sure to check your tuning after you deploy the capo.

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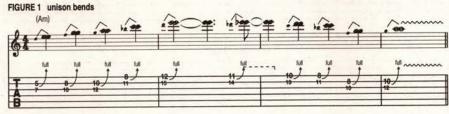


FIGURE 2 E minor pentatonic "box"

FIGURE 2A E "Mixo-Dorian" box



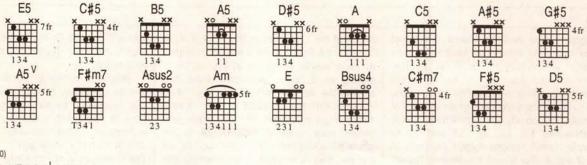
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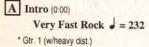
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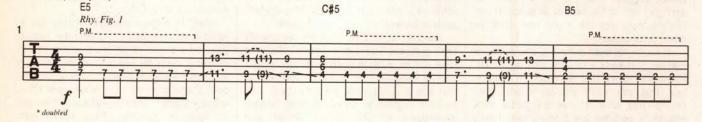
Bass lines are included in the guitar transcriptions

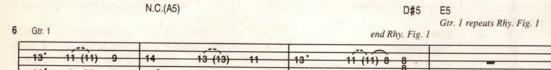
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All notes and chords sound one half step lower then written (key of Eb).

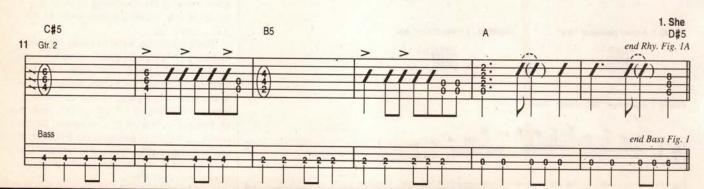






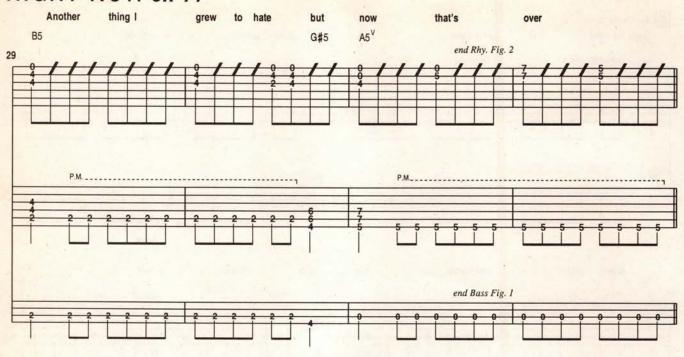


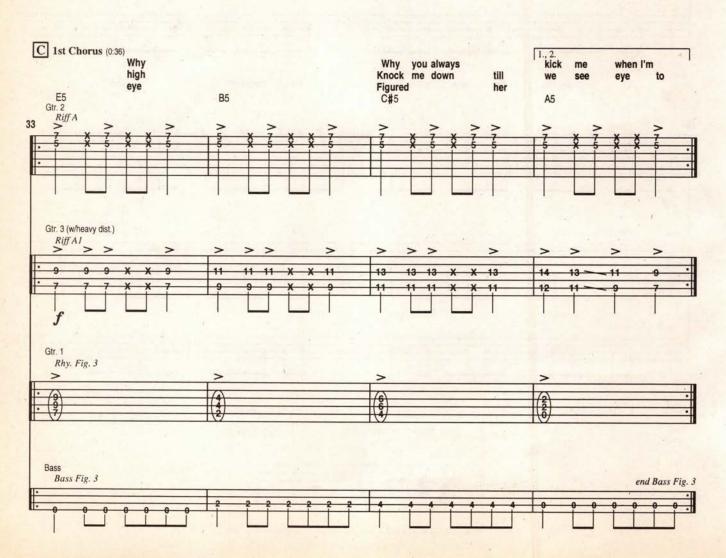


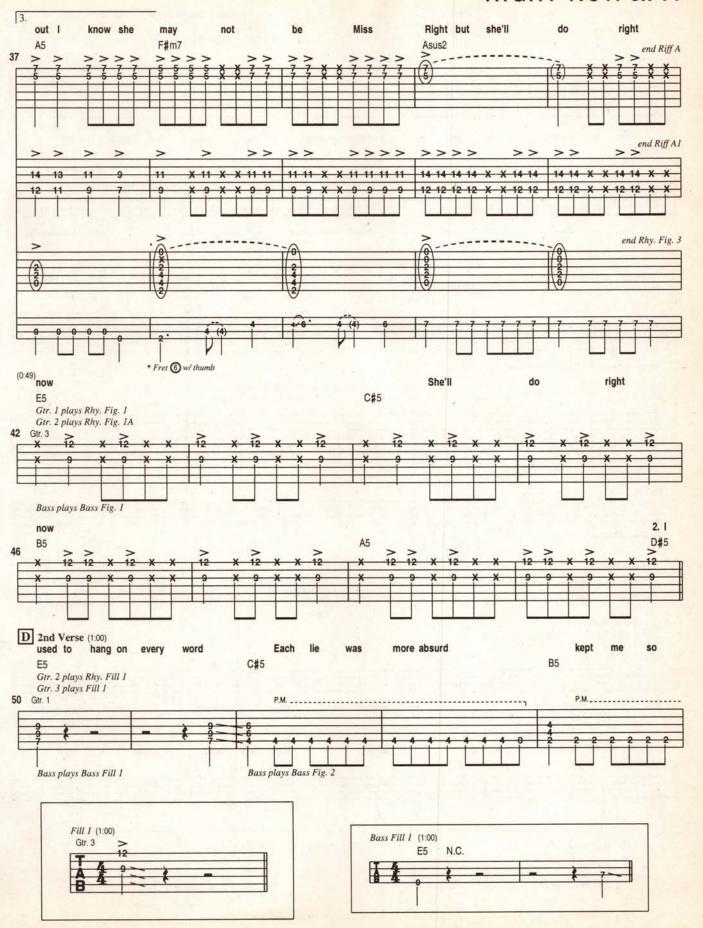


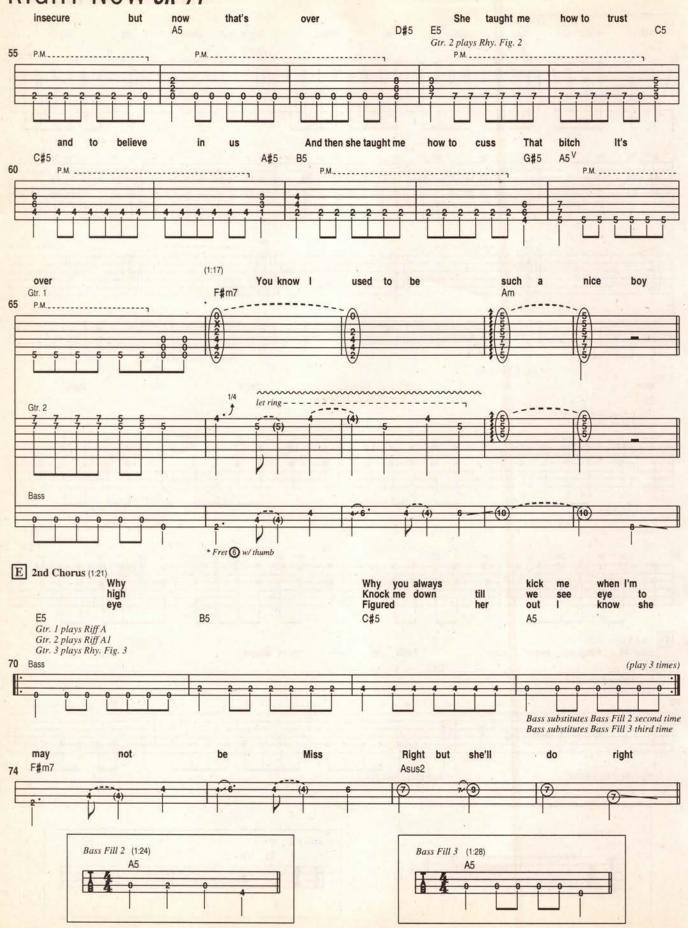
As heard on SR-71's RCA/BMG recording Now You See Inside



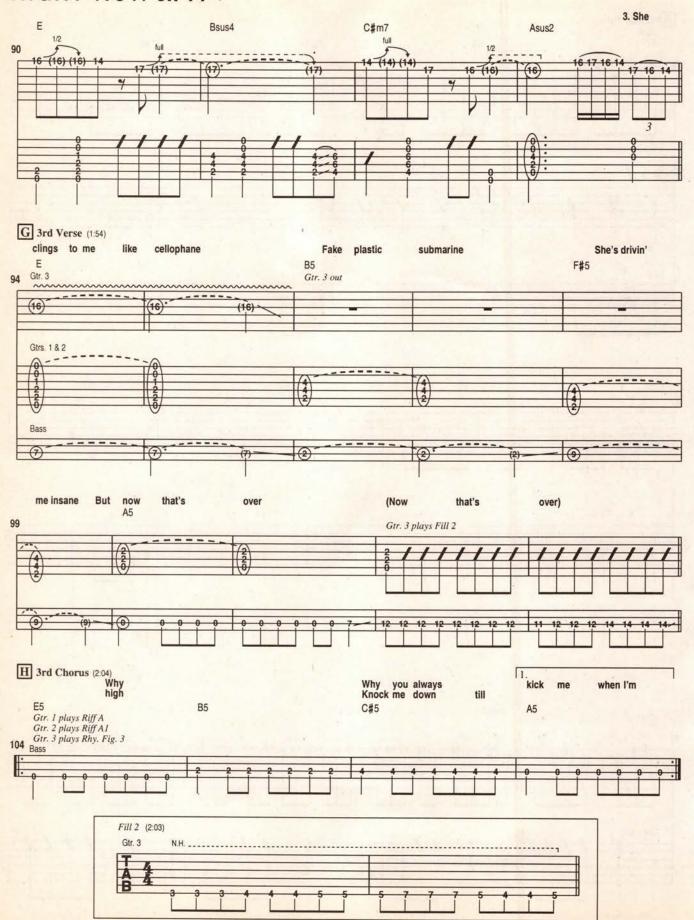


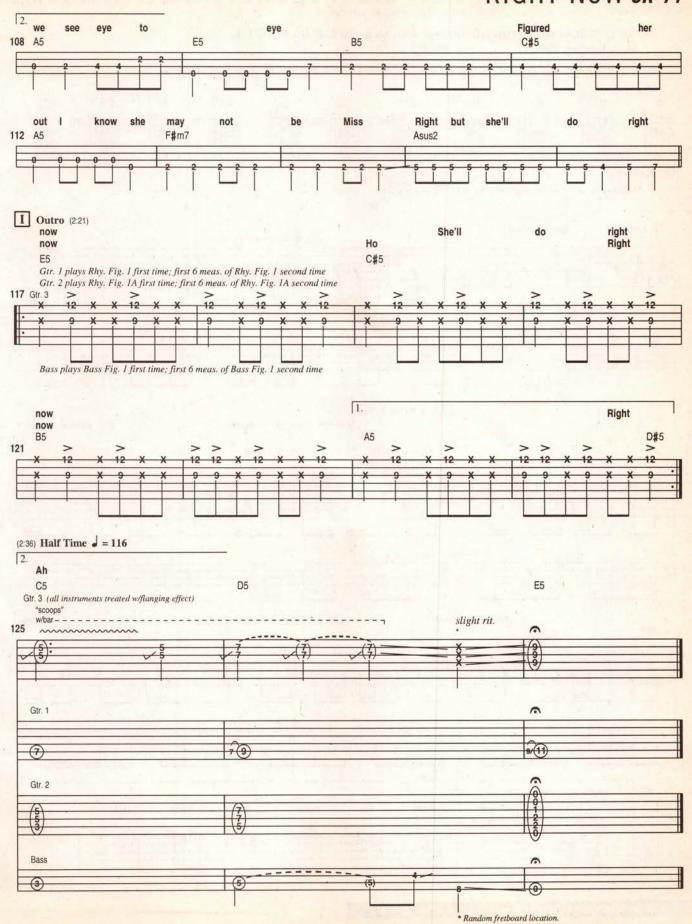












WORDS AND MUSIC BY Joshua Homme and Nick Oliveri TRANSCRIBED BY Jeff Perrin

All gtrs. tune down two whole steps (low to high: C F Bb Eb G C). Bass tuning: (low to high: C F Bb Eb).

All notes and chords sound two whole steps lower than written (key of C minor).

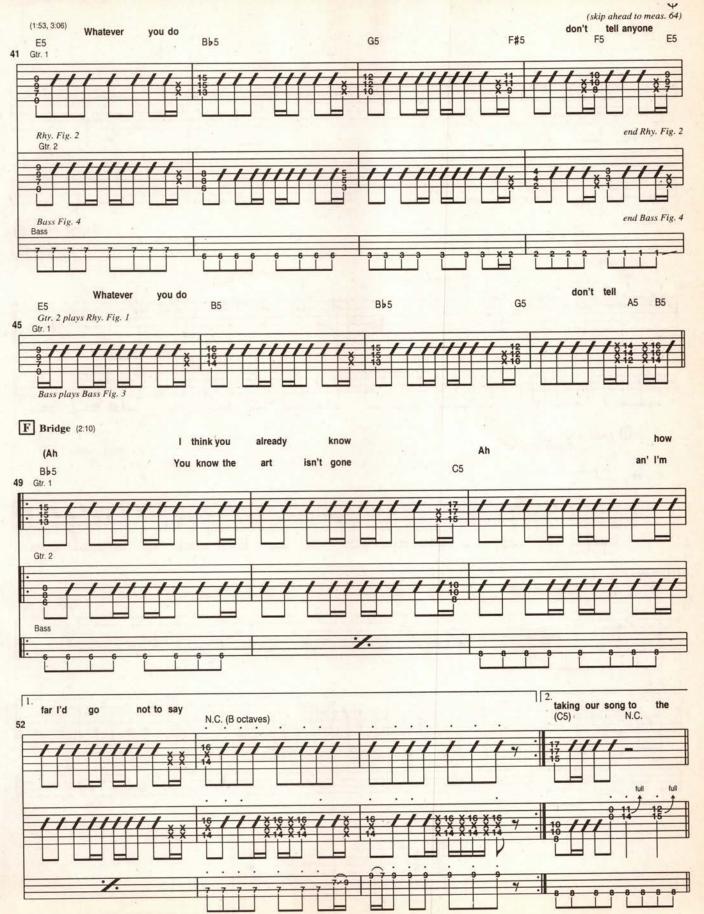


As heard on Queens of the Stone Age's Interscope recording Rated R

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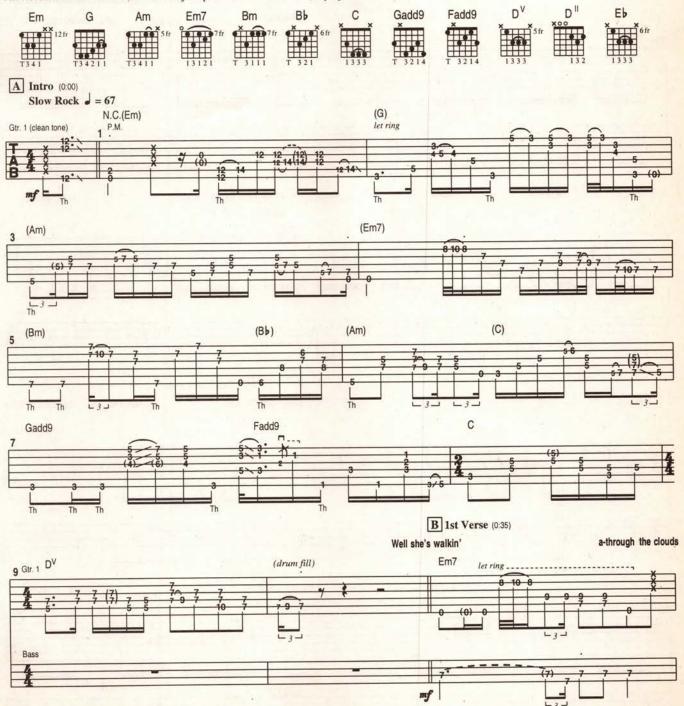
(live at the Royal Albert Hall, as heard on the box set The Jimi Hendrix Experience)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY Jimi Hendrix TRANSCRIBED BY Andy Aledort

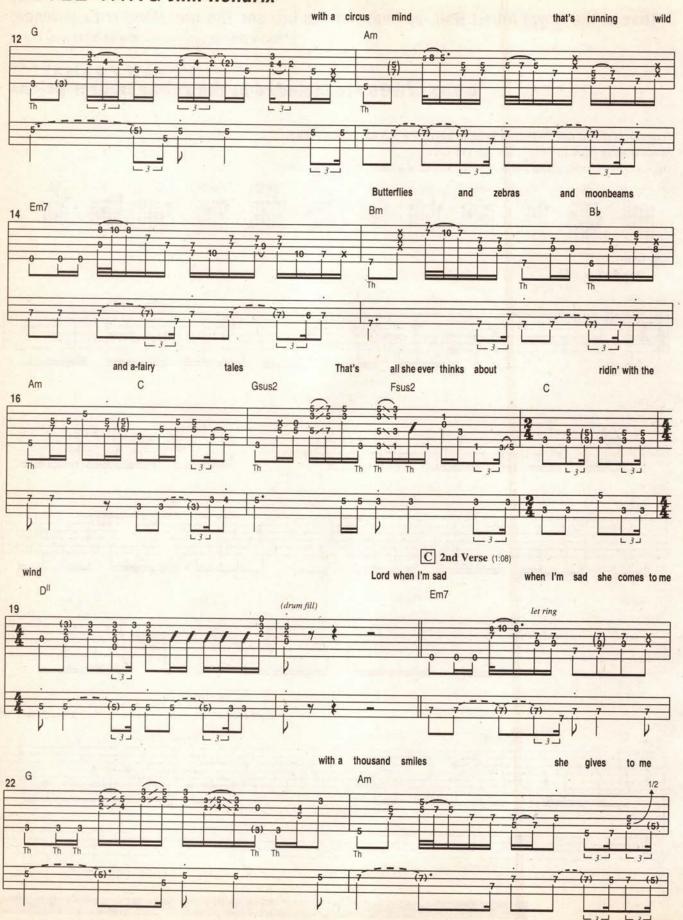
NEW FORMAT Bass lines are included in the guitar transcriptions

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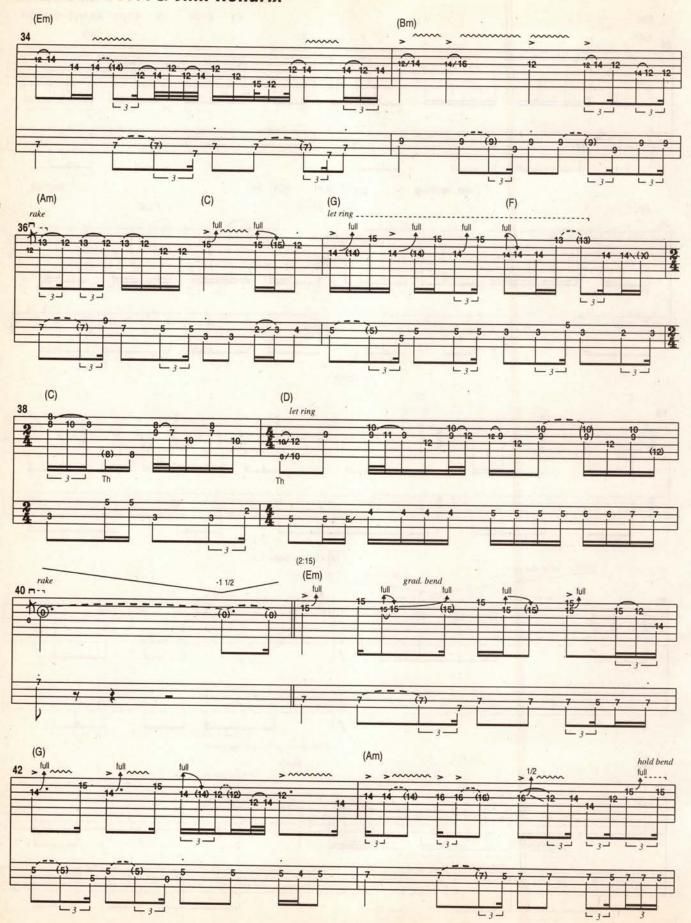
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As heard on the Experience Hendrix/MCA recording The Jimi Hendrix Experience





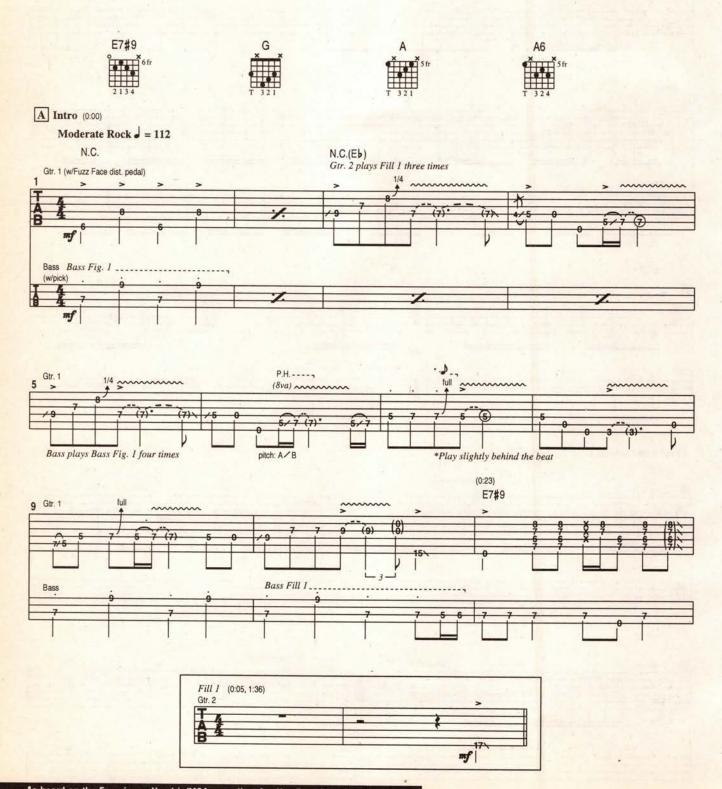




PURPLE HAZE Jimi Hendrix WORDS AND MUSIC BY Jimi Hendrix TRANSCRIBED BY Andy Aledort

NEW FORMAT

Bass lines are included in the guitar transcriptions

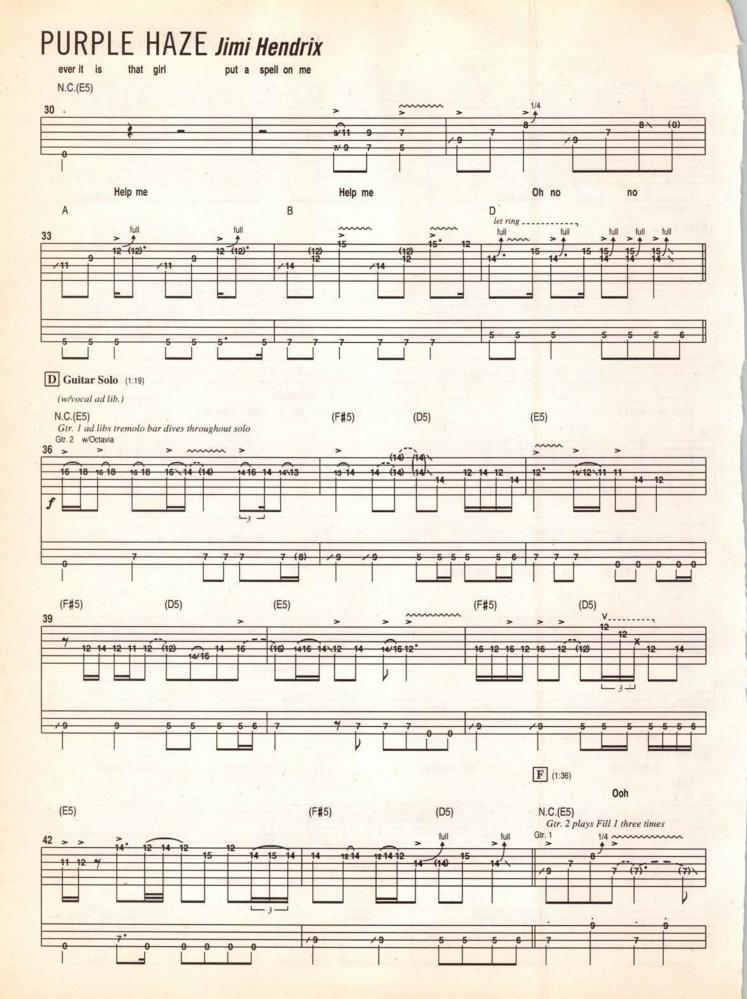


As heard on the Experience Hendrix/MCA recording Are You Experienced?

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PURPLE HAZE Jimi Hendrix

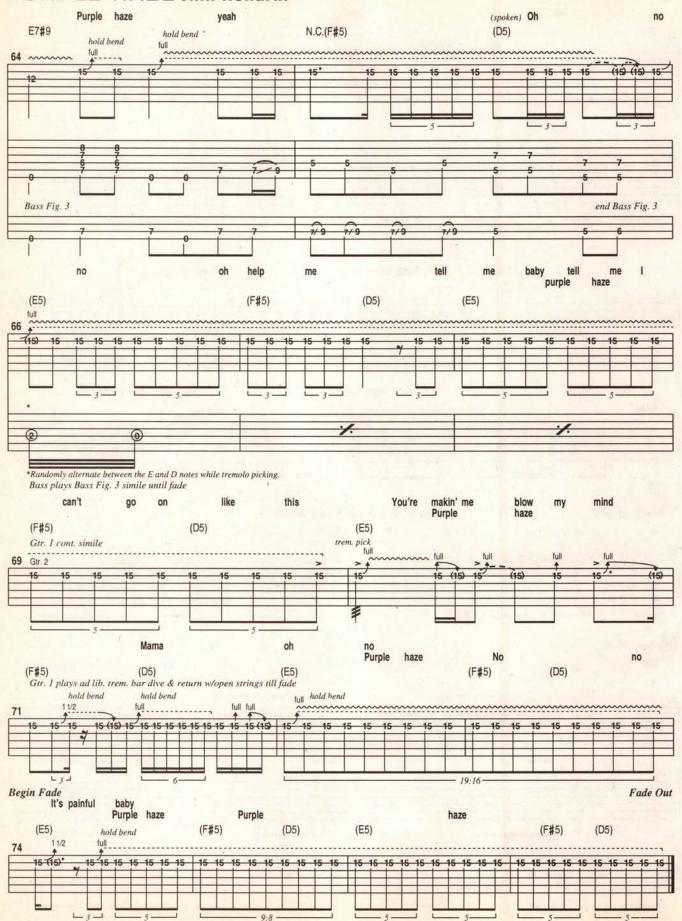




PURPLE HAZE Jimi Hendrix



PURPLE HAZE Jimi Hendrix



HEMORRHAGE Fuel

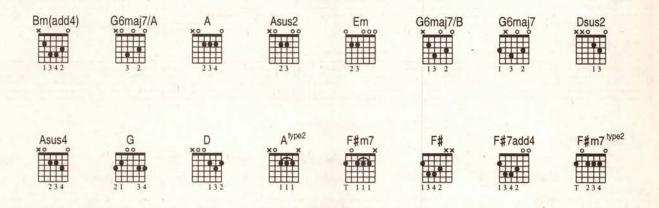
WORDS AND MUSIC BY Carl Bell TRANSCRIBED BY Matt Scharfglass

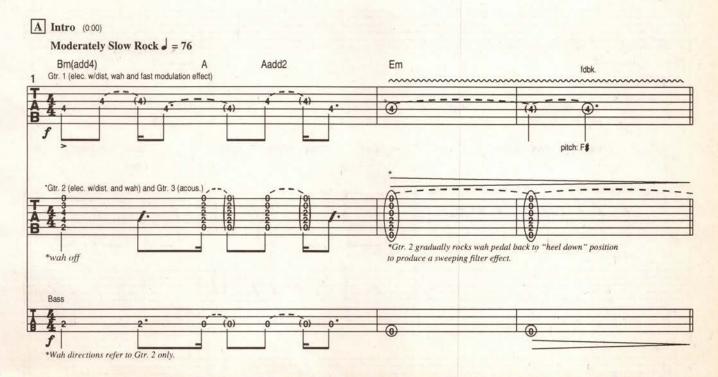
NEW FORMAT

Bass lines are included in the guitar transcriptions

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All notes and chords sound one half step lower than written (key of Bb minor).



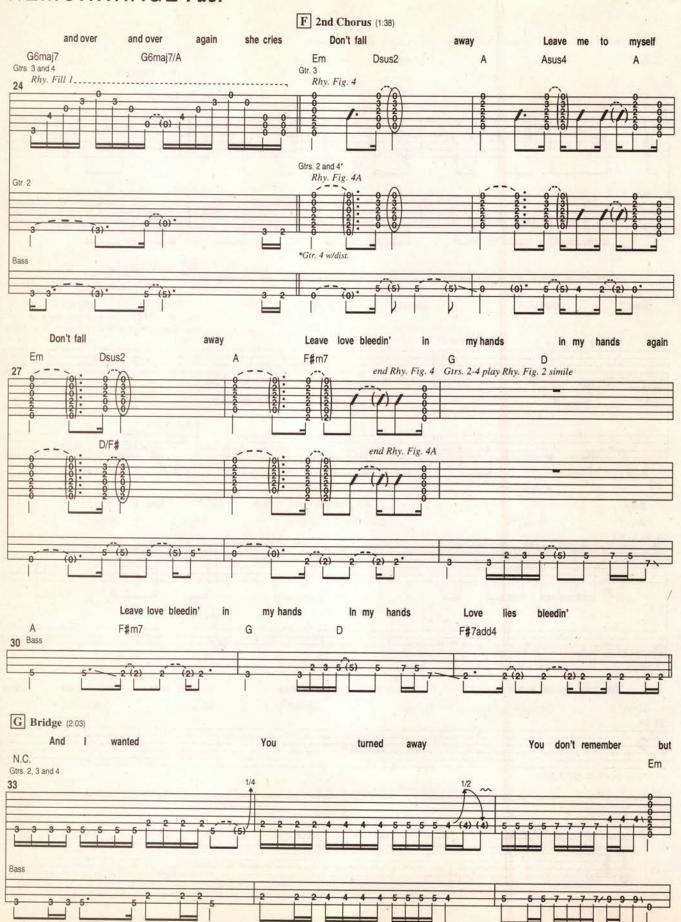


As heard on Fuel's Sony/ 550 recording Something Like Human



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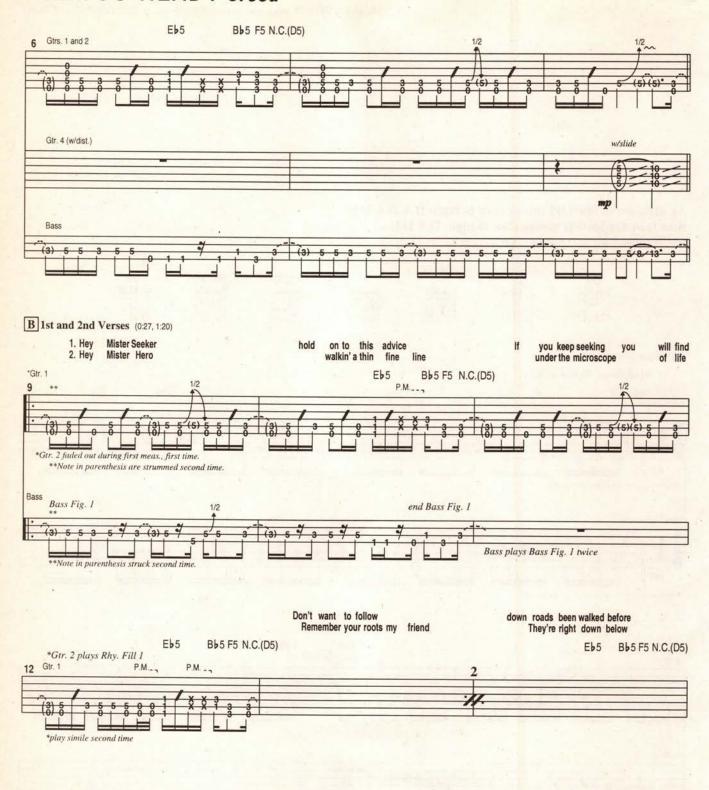
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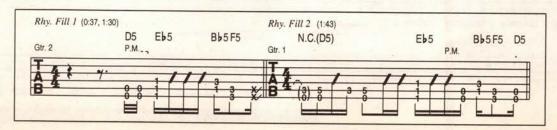
Gtr. 3 (mandolin arr. for elec. gtr.) capo 12

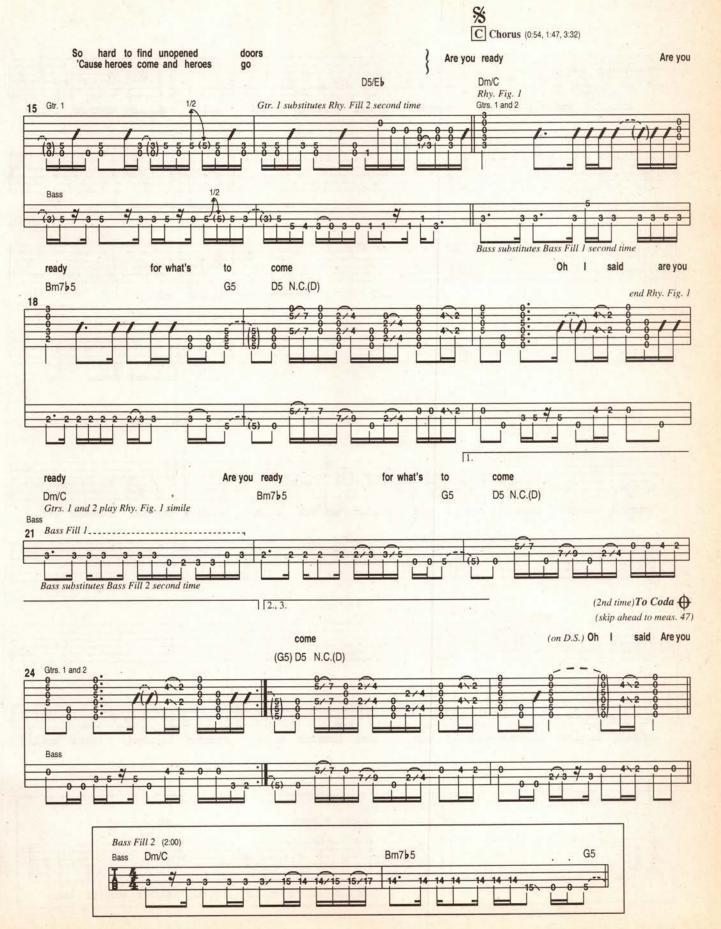


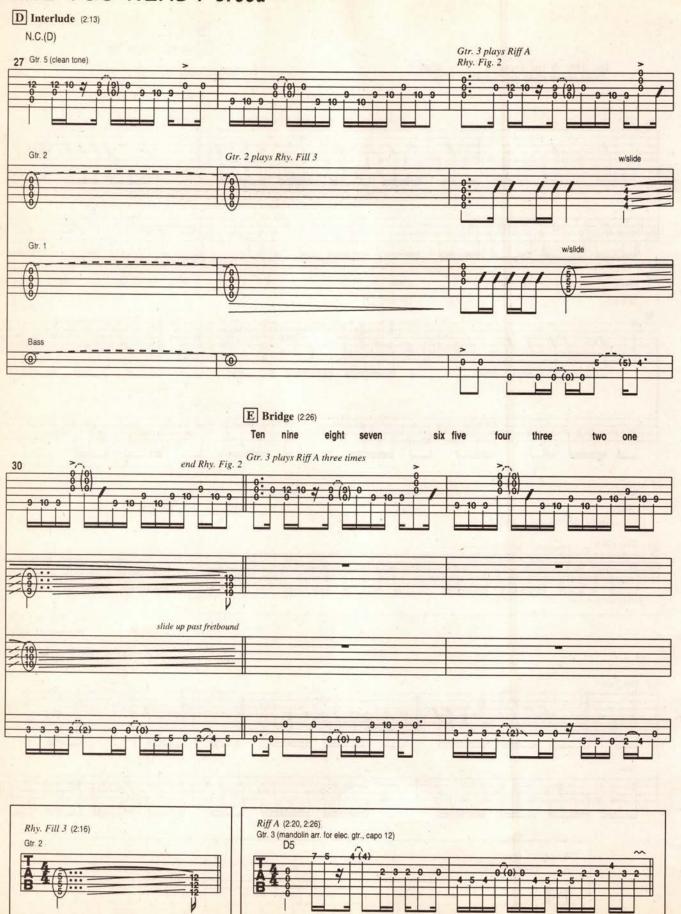
As heard on Creed's Wind-up recording Human Clay

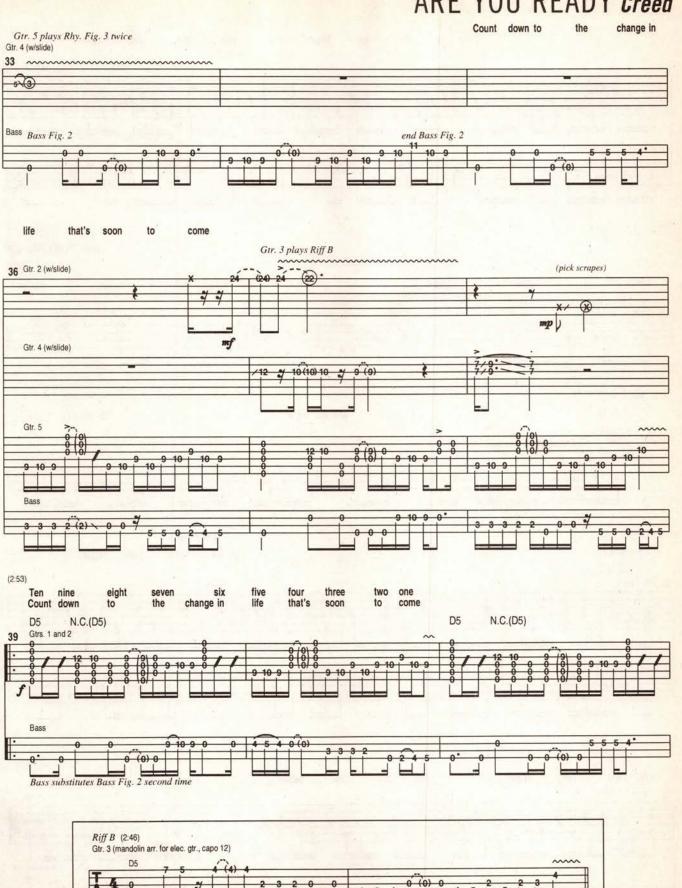
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hard to deny. It recorded one single under the name Shine and pressed 1,000 copies on red vinyl—"Man, I recently saw that record going for 100 bucks on eBay!" says Wino before learning that a group in Arizona had trademarked that name.

Some of Wino's pals offered to go to the desert to convince the other group to give up the moniker, but the musician would rather make love than fight. He chose a new name, Spirit Caravan, after an old Obsessed song. "I wanted to have a name that was a little bit ambiguous but still positive," says Wino. "The positive thing is real important to me. I know people will say, 'Oh, he's a fucking hippie' and all that, but in reality, a positive vibe thing is so much more important to me than a name like 'Bloody Corpse,' you know what I mean? Black metal's hot, I'm not dissing that; it's a modern version of punk rock in a way. But that's not what I'm about."

To date, Spirit Caravan has released two albums, and it's putting the finishing touches on a third, *Elusive Truth*, scheduled for release around Christmas on Tolotta, the label run by Fugazi bassist Joe Lally. (The company has also reissued the self-titled Obsessed disc known as "The Purple Album," though it now has an all-red cover.) Wino is looking forward to touring hard, and he's more optimistic about his band and the state of rock in general than he has been at any point in years.

"It's like everybody says: rock and roll will never die," Wino maintains. "Everybody knows the good feeling they get when they're down and they turn on the radio and they hear 'Heart of Gold' or 'Paranoid.' The power of that special song—man, it can move mountains. As for stoner rock, it's just a new media handle. Everybody is saying that they hate the term, but there always has to be a description put on something. When you think of the term 'stoner rock,' to me it's like you close your eyes, you're really listening to the music and the melody is taking you somewhere. It's like a trip—the music becomes a drug."

KEY RECORDINGS The Obsessed, a.k.a. "The Purple Album" (Tolotta, 2000) is generally considered the classic, though Lunar Womb (Noise, 1991), The Church Within (Columbia, 1994) and Incarnate (Mire, 1999) are all well worth owning. Spirit Caravan's two efforts, Dreamwheel (Meteor City, 1999) and Jug Fulla' Sun (Tolotta, 2000), carry on the proud tradition.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT HIS CUITAR SOUND "I hate to be too general, but basically, it's true: It all comes from Sabbath or Blue Cheer," says Wino. "The Sabbath sound was dark, real low, not much treble—a mid-range kind of grind. The Blue Cheer sound was more like a Marshall or an Orange sound, a little bit more shrill. [Blue Cheer guitarist] Leigh Stephens' sound hasn't been touched—he opened and shut the book on heavy rock in America: you put four Marshall majors out on some pier in San Francisco. That's the low, dark, bassy

sound, which is what everybody emulates to this day, even in techno. But I would also have to give it up to the Grand Funk Railroad kind of thing—low, powerful rhythms, screaming fucking leads and the melody. The melody has got to be there, threading through it all."

SLEEP/HIGH ON FIRE

CHICAGO'S LATE, LAMENTED LOUNGE AX, 1994: Helios Creed and Hawkwind saxophonist Nik Turner are headlining, so it is an adventurous, noise-loving crowd, to say the least. Still, the band that's kicking things off is so punishing, so brutal, so unrelentingly heavy that even the heartiest noise mongers are heading for the door in droves. This is my introduction to Sleep and the guitar genius of Matt Pike.

Sleep came together in San Jose, California, in the late Eighties when Pike hooked up with bassist/vocalist Al Cisneros and drummer Chris Hakius shortly after moving to the desert from Colorado and military school. The goal was the now-familiar one of mixing Sabbath and punk rock. For a while, the vehicle was a quartet, but the nascent band's second guitarist quit to become a priest in Alaska and the lineup settled in as a trio. Its debut, *Holy Mountain*, was released on Earache in 1992, but it was the sophomore effort that really set heads reeling.

Jerusalem is the stoner-rock classic of modern times, as well as one of the heaviest records in any genre ever, period. Released on the Music Cartel in 1999, it consisted of but one 52-minute track-massive, monolithic and lumbering like a brontosaurus through the bog. "Earache sat on Holy Mountain forever, and that fucked with us real bad," Pike recalls. "It took us about four years to get out of that, and during those four years we wrote the song 'Jerusalem.' Al had said, 'Gee, don't you think it would be awesome just to cut through the bullshit and do one huge gigantic piece-like Beethoven, but make it different?" Our influences were real monotone, real Indian-sounding, real dub-reggae. It's pot music, you know what I mean? We were smoking like...God, dude, two to four ounces a day!"

Not for nothing does the back cover depict one of the funkiest homemade bongs ever photographed. But make no mistake: Jerusalem is not merely stoned self-indulgence or a particularly inspired jam preserved for posterity. After its four-year genesis, it was painstakingly recorded during two months of intense studio sessions. "Man, it took a long time," says Pike. "When I was playing that slow intro, that was a bitch to play the whole thing through and keep the time perfect. And then once the drums and bass come in... There were like fucking math charts on the wall, everything. There was so much to remember."

This includes mystical lyrics that would do the Cult of the Illuminati proud. "It was a real spiritual, holy thing for all of us," Pike says. "All of us are very unorthodox Christians and amateur theologizers—we like to study different religions but kind of believe in one God. I give a lot of that album's doing to Him—without a lot of prayer and without a lot of marijuana and our past psychedelic experiences, that album wouldn't have happened."

The problem with an epic effort like Jerusalem is that it's almost impossible to top. Indeed, Sleep came to an end shortly after the disc's release. "It was kind of time," says Pike. "After all that, it was just really fucking tough. We couldn't even be in the same room together." The guitarist retired to his garage and dedicated himself to taking his guitar to the next level. In time, he was joined by some new players, bassist George Rice and drummer Desmond Kensel, friends from up north in Oakland. When they couldn't find anybody to sing, Pike took on those duties himself, and High on Fire was born.

Some fans have said that the band's self-titled debut and the new *The Art of Self Defense* are sort of like *Jerusalem* chopped up into shorter song segments. "I have a certain way of playing, but I've been trying to make the tempos different and develop new picking techniques and different scales. I blend them into something different that Sleep fans can appreciate. But it is its own thing," says Pike. "I just freak out on guitar stuff. I'm completely scientific about it. I do care about my leads, but since I've been in this band I pay more attention to the actual hardness of the riffs. I want to do something that sounds like, 'Whoa, dude! What a trip!"

Pike and his bandmates plan to tour through the fall and begin recording early next year for a spring release. "This next one should be a fucking heavy hitter," Pike promises. "The tempos are even a little faster than the last one, and some of the riffs are like mayhem and a lot more violent sounding. It's like warrior metal or something, but still very psychedelic in its own way." As for whether High on Fire deserves the stoner-rock tag, the musician is as ambivalent as many of his peers.

"It's a very strong scene, but I don't think any of the stoner-rock bands want to be labeled as stoner rock," says Pike. "They don't want to be dismissed as a fad. I'd say I was crossover metal or progressive metal, but I guess we get the stoner-rock label because of the whole pot thing. I think the labeling is stupid, but then again, I just have to accept it, because that's where I've been thrown into." KEY RECORDINGS If you care about heavy rock at all, you need to own Jerusalem (Music Cartel, 1999). (Rush out and buy it right now; the rest of the article will wait.) Got it? Good. Sleep's Holy Mountain (Earache, 1999), The Art of Self Defense (2000, Man's Ruin) and High on Fire (1999, 12th Records) ought to be your next purchases, in that order. (Both

The Art of Self Defense and High on Fire are available from MATAMP Distribution, P.O. Box 1624, Spokane, WA 99210, or visit www.highonfire.com.)

A FEW WORDS ABOUT HIS GUITAR SOUND "I had a lot of influences, man," says Pike. "Hendrix, old Scorpions, Hawkwind. The main thing is Tony Iommi, definitely. And John McLaughlin and Mahavishnu Orchestra. Heavy riffs and odd guitar playing that has strange timing-put those two together and you get me."

SHEAVY

IT'S WRITTEN "SHEAVY" BUT PRONOUNCED "Chevy," like the car.

"We were called Green Machine in the beginning because we couldn't think of a name and because we played 'Green Machine' by Kyuss," drummer Ren Squires says. "That tune was kind of dear to our hearts because it's about hotrods and trucks and cars. Of course, there's like 10 other bands called Green Machine, so when it came time to making a demo, an old girlfriend of mine jokingly said we should call ourselves Ford or Chrysler or Chevy."

The band opted to change the spelling on the latter-missing out on product endorsements, perhaps, but also avoiding lawsuits. I first read the moniker as "(It')s heavy," and I still prefer that version. "Oh, that's a good one, too," says Squires. "First time we've heard that, but it fits." Indeed it does.

sHEAVY first came together in the summer of 1993 in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. There wasn't much to do this remote locale besides get stoned and jam. Squires ran a mail-order distribution service, Dallas Tar Records, for underground metal fans, and whenever he'd do business with another company, he'd send along a copy of his group's initial D.I.Y. release, Blue Sky Mind. That's how sHEAVY became signed to Rise Above in the U.K., and was then picked up by the Music Cartel in the U.S.

Over the course of the next two albums, the quartet honed a hard-hitting but ultramelodic sound that has often been compared to the mighty Black Sabbath, thanks to the eerily Ozzy-like character of singer Steve Hennessey's voice. But this isn't to say that sHEAVY is a one-dimensional tribute band.

"The first record came out and everybody was like, 'Wow, it sounds so much like Sabbath," says Squires. "We understand the connection, but there was so much more there. When we recorded Electric Sleep, we were like, 'Okay, if they want to hear Sabbath, let's give them a Sabbath song!' We named the album after the title track just to put emphasis on that song. There's some tonguein-cheek fun there, but there's a lot of seriousness, too. There are double standards throughout our music, and I think that's what makes it interesting."

If you know your geography, you know that, although Newfoundland is part of North America, it's actually closer to England than the U.S. This puts sHEAVY in an interesting position to comment on the differences between the American and European schools of stoner rock. "In America, I think the stoner thing is just from Kyuss, basically," says Squires. "Unfortunately, there are so many bands that sound just like Kyuss did that now it's actually kind of boring. Plus, America kind of has the southern rock thing, whereas in Britain, it's bands like Cathedral and Orange Goblin and the Rise Above stuff, and they're not doing the same thing as the American metal at all."

Because of the distance and expense, sHEAVY has yet to do a major tour in the U.S., but its story remains inspirational nonetheless: if stoner rock can thrive on a remote, windswept outpost like Newfoundland, it has the potential to catch on anywhere.

"There will always be a certain amount of people who will love this kind of stuff," says Squires. "There are always these kinds of different movements that come up and go down and then fade away, but I think regular rock and roll stuff will always be there, and that is really what we're talking about."

KEY RECORDINGS The new Celestial Hi-Fi (Music Cartel, 2000) builds on the impressive debut, The Electric Sleep (Music Cartel, 1999), by tightening the band's sound and adding a tinge of southern rock to Dan Moore's guitar sound. A FEW WORDS ABOUT HIS GUITAR SOUND "It's kind of lowbudget but big-budget at the same time." says Squires. "Like Grand Funk Railroad had some great recordings: that whole hardpanned thing with two solos hitting the speakers completely independent of each other-it forces you to listen to the music a bit more intensely. Basically it boils down to a live feel."

Nuggets & Boulders

A ROUNDUP OF OTHER BANDS FLYING THE STONER-ROCK FLAG.

Orange Goblin

Time Traveling Blues (Music Cartel) Psychedelic Brit metalheads with a love of American southern rock. The album cover-long-haired biker dude, mean chopper, cosmic starscape—says it all.

Nebula

To the Center (Sub Pop) Everybody's favorite Seattle indie is coming back strong by returning to the killer riff-rock that made it famous in the first place.

Scissorfight

New Hampshire (Wonderdrug) Hard-edged Boston metal-punkpsychedelic-noise monsters with a quick-growing buzz in the underground. Inspirational song title from this 1999 release, their third official album: "Outmotherfucker the Man."

Monster Magnet

Powertrip (A&M)

The most recent from Dave Wyndorf's long-running combo struck some hardrock fans as overly shticky, but I heard it as the aural equivalent of Hunter S. Thompson's Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas. Earlier efforts like Dopes to Infinity and Spine of God play it straighter, heavier and trippier, though they aren't quite as melodic.

Cathedral

Soul Sacrifice/Statik Majik (Earache) Cathedral is a mainstay of the English "doom" scene and a master of the monstrous riff. This recent compilation of two rare EPs from 1992 and '93 is a fine introduction.

Fu Manchu

King of the Road (Mammoth)

The latest from car- and cycle-obsessed California desert rockers doesn't vary the formula established with earlier epics like Eatin' Dust or Daredevil. But we don't turn to stoner rock for variety-we want riffs, and the band delivers. Witness "No Dice," which draws its lyrics from a scene with Spicoli in Fast Times at Ridgemont High ("No shoes, no shirt, no dice!").

The Men of Porn

Porn American Style (Man's Ruin) A San Francisco group comprised of veterans from the Swans, Helios Creed and Acid King that proudly and loudly revels in sleaze via tunes like "Ballad of the Bulldyke," "Dancing Black Ladies" and "Coming Home (Smoking Pot on a Sunday Afternoon While UFOs Drone Overhead)."

The Melvins

The Crybaby (Ipecac) Pacific Northwest innovators who remain as vital and heavy as ever on the final installment of a trilogy that also includes The Maggot and The Bootlicker.

Acid King

Busse Woods (Man's Ruin) Power trio led by Lori S., a.k.a. the exwife of Melvins drummer Dale Crover. Heavy you'd expect, but a killer cover of "The 39 Lashes" from Jesus Christ Superstar might come as a surprise.

Terra Firma

Terra Firma (Music Cartel) Formed by veterans of Unleashed and St. Vitus, this quartet delivers rhythmic stomp à la vintage Sabbath and

fretboard frenzy akin to the best of Ritchie Blackmore.

Atomic Bitchwax

The Atomic Bitchwax (Tee Pee/MIA) New Jersey power trio led by Monster Magnet guitarist Ed Mundell, who lashes out on his own with a vengeance.

Various artists

Rise 13: Magick Rock Vol. 1 (Music Cartel) This compilation serves as a fine sampler of the Rise Above roster, with contributions from Unida, Acrimony Hangnail and Goatsnake as well as many of the artists mentioned above.

Various artists

Right in the Nuts (A Tribute to Aerosmith) (Small Stone) A tribute album that reminds us thatonce upon a time, long before they met Dianne Warren-Steven Tyler, Joe Perry and their mates were proto-stoner rockers. Contributors include beardrock pioneers Raging Slab, Men of Porn, Roadsaw and Atomic Bitchwax, all of whom do their best to reclaim classics like "Sweet Emotion," "Toys in the Attic" and "Bright Light Fright" from the hacks who gave us "Pink." .

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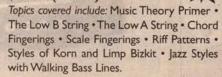


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Testing 1...2...3... THE GEAR IN REVIEW.

Small Miracles

Rivera Chubster 40, Sunn T50C and Peavey Transformer 112 by Tom Beaujour

In an ideal world, you would command a

legion of faithful roadies who would lug your stacks of steaming 4x12 cabinets from one gig to the next. In an ideal world, though, you wouldn't get old or incontinent either, and sexually transmitted diseases would definitely be out of the question.

But this is the real world: people get sick, plagues ravage continents, sexually ambiguous boy bands get megabuck record deals. And unless you're among the chosen few, you'll be the one humping your gear after a gig. Fortunately, there is an ever-expanding array of compact combo amplifiers that will get you through the night with tone to spare and without giving you a herniated lumbar disc. This month, we explore three front-runners in the 1x12 amplifier field.

RIVERA CHUBSTER 40

Weighing it at just under 40 pounds, the Chubster 40 was the lightest combo of our trio, packing a lusciously deep spring reverb

and two totally independent (and footswitchable) channels. According to the amp's manual, channel one is voiced to sound like a "British" amplifier (read Marshall), and it delivers the goods with relative ease. At low-

gain settings, the Chubster effortlessly produces snarling, Seventies crotch-rock tones, while higher gain levels yield a very Nineties-friendly crunch that would be well suited to all manner of riffage. With the gain boost engaged, the Chubster attains positively searing distortion levels, and while they are unfortunately tarnished by a certain amount of harsh upper-frequency hiss, they're sure to satisfy the shredder contingent. At lower master volume settings, the tone controls are remarkably effective and, because they function interactively, allow for an almost infinite degree of nuance. However, at higher volume levels where the power tubes begin to distort, channel one starts to lose its finesse, and the bass control, in particular, becomes virtually useless.

Channel two, with its distinctive "California" voicing, yields sprightly jangle-pop clean sounds with the volume control set at low levels. Once again, the amplifier's

tone-shaping capabilities prove to be far above par. A nifty push-pull function on the midrange control allows the user to select whether the notch of the midrange control sits at at 550Hz (like a Fifties tweed amp) or at 250 Hz (like a blackface Fender Twin), where it produces a classic honky-tonk midrange sound that just oozes Sticky Fingers. Channel two also boasts Rivera's trademark "Ninja Boost" control, which can be accessed by pulling out the master volume knob or via the footswitch. This deadly feature adds a fat, warm glow to the sound and imparts an altogether more corpulent character to the channel. But, as with channel one, the benefits of Rivera's fine preamp design are somewhat diminished when this low-wattage amp is pushed to its limits.

SUNN TSOC

Thanks to its semiclosed-back design and 50 watts of 6L6 power, the Sunn T50C is definitely the hardest rocker of this group, deliv-

ering a tight, focused low-end response at even the most extreme distortion and volume settings. Of course, this sonically superior design comes at a price—the amp weighs in at a backbreaking 75 pounds. And while the



mostly closed cabinet has its distinct advantages, it allows much less sound to escape from the back end. As a result, the T50C's tone doesn't cut through nearly as well as that of other, open-back amplifiers in its weight class.

Channel one of this retro-looking unit features only four controls, none of which affect the tone too drastically. Luckily, the T50C is so well voiced that it is virtually impossible to dial in a bad sound. Lower volume settings produce an aggressive (but not shrill) clean zing, while higher levels yield a glassy, tight growl that's perfectly suited to rock and roll rhythm playing.

While channel one has a distinctly classy disposition, channel two is a veritable orgy of excess. Even at gain settings of three or four, the amp can be pushed into full hardrock crunch by a humbucker-equipped guitar, while extreme gain settings of six or seven produce enough compressed sustain to make you wish legato tapping licks were back in style.

While the T50C's control panel is as basic as they come, its rear panel reveals a sophisticated soul. Among the coolest of its features are a warning light that signals tube trouble, a half-power switch and controls that allow you to assign different effects-loop mix levels to each channel.

PEAVEY TRANSFORMER 112

Last (but certainly not least) is the Transformer 112, Peavey's first foray into the fast-growing world of digital modeling amplifiers. Light, eminently portable and insanely versatile, the Transformer features 12 painstakingly crafted digital amp models that range from vintage combos to high-gain stacks, a full complement of effects (the tremolo and flanger are perfection itself), a built-in tuner and a footswitch that allows remote control of almost every aspect of the amp's parameters.

Even though it generates only 50 watts of solid-state power, the Transformer seems to have more "real amp" cut and punch than most of the other modeling amps available on the market, perhaps because Peavey has much more experience designing solid-state power stages for guitar amplifiers than almost anyone else in the game. And while no amount of power-stage chutzpah can make an open-back 1x12 combo sound like a

roaring British stack (the Transformer actually sounds more like a good recording of a British stack played through a single speaker), the amp models here provide a wide range of attractive sounds, particularly the tweed and Peavey high-gain settings. In addition, the effects are excellent and somehow achieve a pseudo-stereo lushness, and the factory presets are for the most part usable, if a bit bombastic and wet.

In addition to the fine array of tones it provides, the Transformer 112 has some of the most wicked bells and whistles we've see in a long time: control knob settings are indicated by LEDs to facilitate quick tweaks on dark stages, the strobe-style tuner delivers a better light show than 'N Sync and the handy headphone jack will keep your parents and/or neighbors happy. A balanced

XLR direct output would have been a welcome addition to the back panel, but that's probably too much to ask from such a reasonably priced unit.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you have a lead-footed drummer or a barbarian bass player, these three amps, with their relatively tame power ratings and single speakers, might put you at a disadvantage. But if your musical pursuits are of a more-civilized nature, each of these amplifiers is well worth investigating.

MANUFACTURERS

Rivera Research & Development Corp., 13310 Ralston Ave., Sylmar, CA 91342; 1-800-809-2444, (818) 833-7066; fax: (818) 833-9656; rivera@rivera.com; www.rivera.com Sunn, a division of Fender Musical Instruments, 7975 N. Hayden Rd.,

Sunn, a division of Fender Musical Instruments, 7975 N. Hayden Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85258; (480) 596-9690; sunnamps.com Peavey Electronics Corp. 711 "A" St., Meridian, MS 39301; (601) 483-5365; fax: (601) 486-1188; www.peavey.com

MODEL	Sunn T50C	Rivera Chubster 40	Peavey Transformer 112
LIST PRICE	\$1,699.99	\$1.095	\$749
DIMENSIONS (W x H x D)	24-1/2 x 22 x 11-3/5	20-7/8 x 18 x 9-3/4	21-3/4 x 22-3/8 x 14-1/4
WEIGHT	75 lbs.	37 lbs.	39.5 lbs.
CHANNELS	Two: Clean and Overdrive	Two: "British" and "American"	16 amp models, 16 factory and 16 user presets
FRONT PANEL	Input; channel 1 volume, treble, bass & middle; channel 2 gain, treble, bass, middle & volume; channel select button w/ LED, presence (one control for channels 1 & 2), reverb (one control for channels 1 & 2), standby switch	High- and low-gain inputs; channel 1 volume (doubles as push/pull channel selector), bass, middle, treble, master (doubles as push/pull gain hoost selector); channel 2 volume, treble, middle (doubles as push/pull midrange notch control) bass, master (doubles as push/pull Minja boost; reverb (one control) for channels 1 & 2), power on/off /off	High- and low-gain inputs, preset store switch, user switch (toggles between user and factory presets), rotary amp model selector, pre gain; low, mid and high equalization; post gain, reverb, modulation effect selector switch (chorus, flanger, phaser, tremolo, rotary speaker), modulation rate, modulation depth (also modulation effect on/off) delay tap tempo delay feedback, delay level (also delay on/off), master level, TransTube power dynamics (damping and compression) level
REAR PANEL	Power on/off, fuse, AC power socket, high/low output selector, main amp out, main amp in, footswitch input, exterior speaker out, main speaker out, impedance selector (4, 8 or 16 ohms)	AC power socket, mains fuse, speaker out (8 or 16 ohms), line out, 8-pin footswitch jack, power amp & preamp out (effects loop)	Power on/off, MIDI out, MIDI in (also footswitch in), headphone out (mutes speaker), effects return & send
FOOT SWITCH FUNCTIONS	Channel select, effects on/off, reverb on/off	Channel select, channel 1 gain boost, channel 2 Ninja hoost	Preset/bank selection/display, effects on/off selection/display, remote tuner access/display, Tap tempo of delay w/ display
SPEAKER	Celestion G12T75 (12-inch, 16 ohm)	Specially-designed Celestion 12-inch	Peavey 12-inch
PREAMP	Tube circuit using five 12AX7WA tubes	Tube circuit using five 12AX7 tubes	Solid-state digital modeling circuit
POWER AMP	Tube circuit using two 6L6GC tubes	Tube circuit using 2 x EL34 tubes	Solid-state circuit with T Dynamics
OUTPUT POWER	50 watts RMS	30 watts RMS into 8 or 16 ohms	50 watts @ 4 ohms

NITS &BOLS

HOW DID THE GUITAR SLIDE GET ITS START?

THE TECHNIQUE OF FRETTING A STRING with a smooth object has appeared in different cultures at various times in history. As early as the 6th century A.D., Indian musicians were performing on the gootvadyam, an ancient stringed instrument that was fretted with an ebony rod or glass ball. In all likelihood, the technique was introduced in America courtesy of the single-string musical bow, a simple African instrument on



which the pitch
was changed by
means of slide
made of bone,
stone or metal. This
instrument and others like it were popular in the
American South,
particularly among
black children, who

would nail a length of wire to a board and play it with a stone or glass pill bottle.

The widespread popularity of slide playing began in the 19th century with Hawaiian steel music. The Spanish guitar reached Hawaii in the 1830s, followed by metal strings some 30 years later, and during the next few decades the native musicians developed "slack key" tunings. These partial or full, open-chord tunings became the foundation for Hawaiian slide music and remain a key part of many slide styles.

While it's unclear who actually developed the slide technique, Joseph Kekuku is widely accepted as the father of Hawaiian steel. It was Kekuku who in 1885 used a steel railroad spike to fret his guitar and developed his style from there. By the time Frank Ferera popularized the Hawaiian style on the U.S. mainland in 1900, black musicians in the South were already using knife blades and bottles to fret their guitars.

In the past century, the Hawaiian style evolved into the Dobro music of bluegrass, the pedal steel guitar of country and the bottleneck style of blues. As such, the slide itself evolved into many different forms, from simple polished metal rods and bars held in the fingertips for lap-held instruments to glass, metal and ceramic tubes that are worn over the finger for standard guitars. Some guitarists have also made use of common household objects, such as socket wrenches, medicine bottles and, of course, bottle necks. For those who prefer to purchase their slides, a large range is available from companies like Jim Dunlop, Big Heart Slide and Latch Lake.

-Dominic Hilton

Royale Wedding

Samick JZ112AM Royale by Dominic Hilton

After building every type of guitar imaginable

for some of the biggest names in the music business, Samick has created a line of guitars that define the company's unique perspective on guitar making. Teaming up with designer Greg Bennett, Samick has created its Signature series, an exciting new line of guitars that includes basses and acoustics, many of which seem to be streamlined, updated versions of favorite designs. We decided to see what the Bennett-Samick marriage has achieved with the JZ112AM Royale electric.

This Korean-made thinline semi is certainly a pretty, young thing, with a sumptuous curly maple top, cream binding throughout and all the right details for an f-hole equipped semi. Its manageable proportions and single Florentine cutaway follow an outline reminiscent of Gibson's old ES-175T, although the upper bout features a curvy tuck instead of a round shoulder. The maple top is a book-matched veneer over a laminate that has been pressed into an arched contour. The back and sides are formed from a mahogany laminate and finished in a rich brown stain to contrast with the top and binding. The bridge pickups and neck have been fitted to the solid mahogany center block, resulting in enhanced sustain and stability. The hardware is standard fare for this type of guitar: a stop tailpiece and Tune-O-

Matic style bridge, floating pickguard,

twin chrome-covered Samick humbuckers with a volume and tone for each and a three-way pickup selector.

The set neck is machined from mahogany with a matching brown stain, and, like the body, it features a cream binding. The fretting has been done reasonably well, even over the tricky binding edge, but some of the fret tops feel gritty to play, suggesting that the finishing was rushed. The neck profile has a smooth, full feel that's a great pleasure to play, especially with its low action and flat radius. Praise is also in order for the elegant kicked-back headstock: it provides a near-straight string path and is one of the most appealing original designs around.

Perhaps our only criticism of the Royale is with its finish detail, an area that often separates Korean instruments from more expensive guitars built in the U.S. and Japan. Some of the guitar's binding, shaping and staining were a little rough in places. However, this is purely cosmetic in nature, and the guitar's actual construction seems very solid.

Having all that air reverberating around the large acoustic chambers is obviously going to add a lot of character to the tone of a semi, and the Royale jangles with the best of them. That vibrant throaty quality is here in spades, com-

bined with the snappy acoustic edge that makes semis such satisfying guitars to play. With our test model plugged in, the Royale's bridge humbucker produced warm tones that gave heft to single-note runs and chords, while the neck pickup produced velvety, vocal-like textures that were perfect for jazz-style playing. With a little amp gain dialed in, the Royale unleashed its wild side, and its rich, balanced tone was packed with harmonic detail. In fact, whether picked, strummed or palm-muted, the Royale showed a highly dynamic response. This is one guitar that can satisfy just about any style that suits your mood.

THE BOTTOM LINE

It's difficult to improve on a formula as established as that of the thinline semi, but Samick have tackled the design's complex construction and come up with a winner. The company has succeeded in producing a great-

looking instrument that's a
blast to play in any style.
The body may be wide—
and, man, is it heavy—but
all that wood and air produces a big tone, and the
fine neck makes getting it
out a lot of fun.

Samick Music Corp., 18521 Railroad St., City of Industry, CA 91748; (626) 964-4700; fax: (626) 965-5224

THE FINE PRINT

6

6

MODEL: Samick JZ112AM Royale

LIST PRICE: \$979

BODY: Thinline semi-acoustic, mahogany-lamnate back and sides, figured maple-laminate top

NECK: Set-neck, mahogany

INGER-BOARD: Rosewood with trapezoid inlays

SCALE LENGTH: 24-3/4 inches

FRETS: 22 large oval

WIDTH AT NUT: 1-11/16 inches

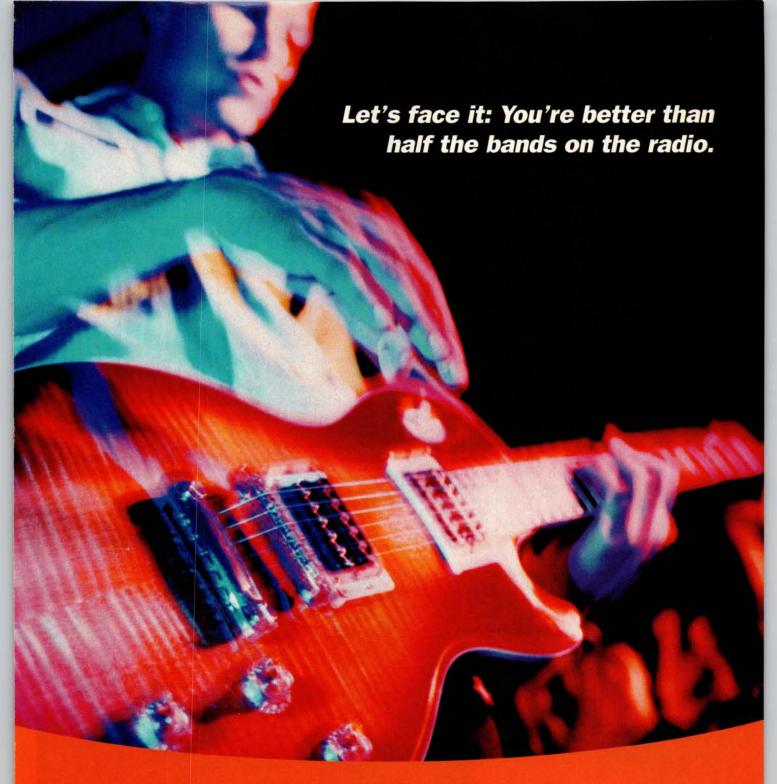
TUNERS: Grover

PICKUPS: Two chrome-covered Samick humbuckers
CONTROLS: Bridge volume, bridge tone, neck

volume, neck tone, three-way selector switch

BRIDGE: Tune-O-Matic with stop tailpiece
COLOR OPTIONS: Amber over figured maple

(reviewed), wine red on mahogany, wine red on mahogany with gold hardware



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ELECTRO-HARMONIX FREEDOM AMP

Electro-Harmonix pioneered battery-powered guitar amplifiers back in 1971 with the little Freedom amp. This updated version of the diminutive combo delivers a hefty 15 watts of power and up to six hours of battery life. Combining an eight-inch speaker with a solid-state amp, the Freedom dispenses plenty of warm clean tone and pumps out an impressive amount of overdrive, projecting a sound that's surprisingly large. With only three controls (volume, tone and bite), the Freedom makes it easy to carve out a great piece of tone. The chunky cabinet includes a handle and flip-out stand, the preamp output lets you go direct to a mixing board and the onboard battery is rechargable (adapter included). In short, this is a gnarly, no-nonsense amp with a big roar for its size.

LIST PRICE: \$338 Electro-Harmonix, 20 Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003; (212) 529-0466; fax: (212) 529-0486; www.ehx.com

CRATE LIMO TX50D

Designed to answer the prayers of buskers everywhere, the 50-watt Limo has two instrument channels, one mic channel and digital effects (including delay, reverb, chorus and rotary sounds), making it a mini PA and guitar amp in one totable package. The mic channel has XLR low-impedance and quarter-inch high-impedance jacks, three-band eq with level control, and a DSP send control to balance the effect level. The second channel is designed for instruments and operates simultaneously with the mic channel. It features the same controls as the mic channel, as well as a button that activates a third channel designed especially for electric guitars. This last channel has gain and level knobs, and a shape control that alters the midrange contour from humped to scooped. This versatile package also includes its own rechargeable power supply (adapter included).

LIST PRICE: \$499.99 Crate, St. Louis Music, 1400 Ferguson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63133; (314) 727-4512; fax: (314) 727-8929; www.crateamps.com

HIWATT CUSTOM 20

It may not be battery powered, but this small, 8x1 combo will bring a big sound into the smallest places. Decked out in Hiwatt's trademark livery, the 20-watt Custom is a super-flexible dual-channel tone machine. In addition to gain and master controls and a three-band eq, the Custom 20 has a "fine" knob for adjusting the overall contour of the midrange frequencies from enhanced to scooped. Switching between the clean and distortion channels is accomplished via a panel button or by means of a footswitch connected to the rear panel jack. Clean tones are big and sassy, while the dirty channel has more gain on tap than most players would need. Toss in an effects loop and headphone socket for private jam sessions, and this handsome little Hiwatt becomes the perfect first amp for rockers with a lust for heavy tones.

LIST PRICE: \$269Hiwatt USA, 8163 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91605; (818) 764-8383; fax: (818) 764-0080; www.hiwatt.com





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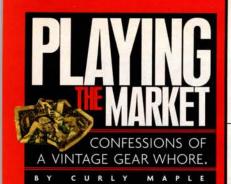
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ENDANGERED SPECIES

AS I'VE MENTIONED IN EARLIER columns, the hardest part of being a successful vintage dealer isn't selling guitars (nice vintage axes virtually sell themselves)—it's finding them. Amazing as it seems, after nearly two decades of the vintage market gobbling guitars at full throttle, virtually untouched instruments are still out there, most of them collecting dust in closets and attics, or under beds.

On a recent visit to a friend's guitar shop, your Uncle Curly had a rare encounter with one these "closet classics": a Sunburst 1966 Stratocaster that still had the mail-in warranty card, owner's manual



(see bottom photo) and cable in the accessory pocket of its virtually unblemished case. The Strat had been acquired from a dentist, who purchased the guitar new in 1966, changed the strings once in 1967 (yes, they were still on the ax when I played it) and then never looked at the instrument again. To me, the pristine condition of this particular Strat was downright disorienting; I like guitars that look as if they've seen a few barroom brawls in their day. To others (including the person who plopped down \$5,000 for the guitar a mere two hours after it hit the showroom floor), such a specimen is the answer to years of silent prayers.

So yes, untouched Gibsons and Fenders from the Fifties and Sixties can be found. All you need is a little luck. And a lot of patience.

In closing, I leave you with a short excerpt from the 1966 Stratocaster owner's manual: "The Stratocaster is truly an artist's guitar, and one of the most advanced instruments on the market."

Wow. Maybe that's the line that hooked Jimi!

Hot: Seventies Fender Precision Basses Not: Japanese Fender reissue Stratocasters and Telecasters Overpriced: Ross Flangers



Hot-Rod Preacher

Reverend Slingshot Custom. by Dominic Hilton

The Slingshot Custom has fire and brimstone in its looks and hi-tech witchery in its construction. Built by Reverend Guitars, this new model joins the Detroit guitarmaker's congregation of acclaimed instruments and is the result of designer Joe Naylor's tireless quest for powerhouse tone.

Unlike most electric guitar builders, Reverend employs a number of alternative materials in its guitars' semi-solid construction. In fact, the only wood used in the Slingshot's body is a center block of white mahogany that contains a steel tone bar close to the bridge. The rim of the Slingshot is made from injection-molded plastic using a technique invented by Naylor himself. Typical of Reverend's other guitars, the Slingshot's front and back are covered with brightly colored phenolic laminate. (The Slingshot Custom can also be had with a cool, machine-turned aluminum finish, as shown, for an additional \$275.) Lastly, a chromed forearm rest and deco-inspired stepped pickguard indelibly stamp the guitar with a

look all its own.

Throughout its design, the Slingshot displays a mix of familiar and contemporary touches. The trio of Reverend P-90-style pickups are teamed up with master volume and tone controls and a Strat-type pickup selector that offers the traditional five positions. Naylor modeled the bolt-on maple neck after the popular profile of early Sixties Stratocasters, flattening its radius and fitting it with 22 large frets for a

more modern feel. Other contemporary touches include a through-body six-saddle bridge, roller saddles, a graphite nut and sealed machine heads.

Acoustically, our test model Slingshot resonated like a cast-iron bathtub—an excellent indica-

working its magic. With the guitar plugged into a simmering tweed combo, this resonance was truly spectacular. The body materials may be unconventional but they produce an enormous tone, with the lush shimmer of a 335 and the punchy definition of a Tele. This awesome combination was also well balanced between the guitar's focused bassy growls and upper-frequency jangle. The pickups obviously added a lot to this supercharged tone, pumping out the midrange twang and serving wailing blues licks from the neck position. In short, this is one smoking, blues-rock hotrod.

Props to Naylor for designing a neck that feels as he intended it to—like a vintage Strat that's seen a few refrets and a whole lotta mileage. The easy feel is helped along with some crisp fretwork and buzz-free low action.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Reverend has done something very right with the Slingshot Custom, using fresh concepts to build a better guitar, without alienating the player. The result is a guitar that feels naturally comfortable, with a tone that will make you into a believer.

LIST PRICE: \$1,244 as shown

(\$969 with standard finish)

Reverend Musical Instruments, 23109 Gratiot Ave., Rm.#2 Eastpointe, MI 48021; (810) 775-1025; fax: (810) 775-2991; www.reverendmusical.com

THE BUZZ BIN

New, Hip and Under the Radar

LOW PROFILE

FENDER SUB-SONIC

Although the Buzz Bin won't make a habit of spotlighting gear produced by large manufacturers, once in a while the big guys come up with something so deliciously cool that it would simply be criminal not to shed a little ink on it. Such is the case with Fender's new Sub-Sonic guitar (\$1,400), which features an elongated 27-inch scale length and is tuned a fifth lower (low to high: B E A D G B) than a standard six-string guitar.

Originally available only as a costly Custom Shop model, the Sub-Sonic is now a standard pro-

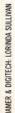
American Special line. It should prove to be a godsend for players who have neither the time nor the inclination to spend long hours mastering a seven-string but who still want the ability to rumble and riff as heavily as the low-life competition. The guitar's long scale and heavy strings probably won't inspire players to whip out the most frenzied speed licks of their careers, but the Sub-Sonic's playing surface feels comfortable and pliable almost instantly, and the familiar Stratocaster body shape and control layout is as easy to navigate as your childhood wading pool.

There's little doubt that Fender has designed this guitar

primarily for headbangers in search of a quick detuned fix, and the humbucking bridge pickup certainly makes riffs resound with gargantuan girth. But the instrument isn't just for greasy kid's stuff: the Sub-Sonic also holds untold pleasures for players with mellower intentions. Picked arpeggios resound with piano-like clarity, and the single-coil middle and neck pickups produce clear, articulate tones that make this one instrument guaranteed to make you late for your day job.

—Tom Beaujour

Fender Musical Instrument 1975 N. Hayden Rd., Suite 2-100, Scottsdale, AZ 85258: www.fender.com





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Audio File PRO AUDIO IN REVIEW.

Aural Exciters

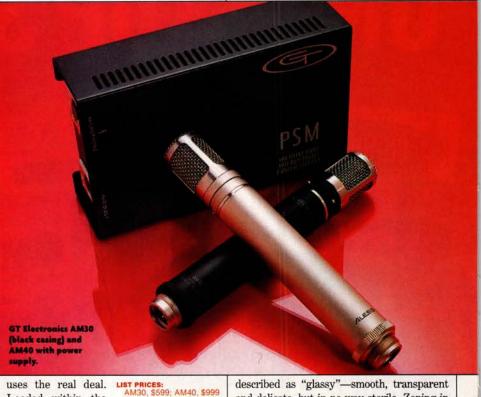
GT Electronics AM30 and AM40 microphones. by Dominic Hilton

GT Electronics began with Groove Tubes, the specialist company dedicated to providing vacuum tube users with the finest matched tubes for their equipment. Recently, the company diversified into the field of high-end microphones and this new venture operates under the name of GT Electronics. Furthermore, it operates from under the wing of the mighty Alesis Corporation, which enables the company's handcrafted products to reach customers at more competitive prices. These microphones take longer to build than many handmade acoustic guitars (the diaphragm adjustment alone takes more than 20 hours of skilled work), which GT Electronics maintains is necessary to produce microphones with unique character. So, let's take a look at the AM30 and AM40 models, both of which are front-address condenser microphones optimized for ue with musical instruments.

The AM30 arrives in a custom aluminum flight case that includes an AMC1 cardioid capsule, hard mount and foam windscreen. The AMC1 capsule contains a gold-evaporated Mylar diaphragm that's three-quarters of an inch in diameter and only three microns thick to achieve maximum sensitivity. The AM30 utilizes Class A FET (field effect transistor) circuitry, believed by GT Electronics to match the electronic behavior of tubes better than other transistor-based op-amps. To operate, this solid-state condenser circuitry requires 48 volts of phantom power, which is usually available from a mixer's mic preamp.

Two switches are located just beneath the headpiece of the AM30. The first is a -15dB sensitivity pad switch, which lowers the output level of the microphone for loud sources, such as a raging guitar amp. On most mics, this switch usually functions by reducing the output of the internal op-amp, but this can color the sound. The AM series pad switch works by reducing the capsule voltage, thus preventing coloration. The second switch is a bass roll-off. It activates a high-pass filter that attenuates -12dB per octave below 75Hz. This is used to remove unwanted low-frequency noise, such as vibrations from the floor or mic stand.

The silver-finished AM40 looks almost identical to the AM30 and also comes in an aluminum case with an AMC1 capsule, hard mount and foam windscreen. However, the case also holds a chunky power supply unit and 25-foot connection cable. The reason is simple: whereas the AM30 uses FET technology to emulate tube characteristics, the AM40



uses the real deal. Loaded within the casing is a Groove Tubes GT5840M—a subminiature tube chosen for its low

ove MANUFACTURER:
GT Electronics, Alesis
Corporation, 1633 26th St
Santa Monica, CA 90044;
the (310) 255-3400; fax: (310)
255-3401; www.alesis.com

distortion and minimum sensitivity to vibration, something which is crucial for this application. The tube also operates with a cooler, 6-volt plate voltage, rather than the usual 12volts, which helps to minimize noise produced by the tube itself.

As with the AM30, the AM40 has -15dB pad and bass roll-off switches. But instead of the standard three-pin XLR jack, the AM40 has a six-pin connector that allows the power supply to feed the microphone the necessary voltage via the supplied six-conductor cable. The PSM power supply is extremely simple to use and has a six-pin locking jack for the input cable and a standard three-pin XLR output to feed a microphone preamp or console.

Both microphones were tested through studio monitors and earphones and used in conjunction with a digital recording system. Each mic was used to close mic an electric guitar amp set to different tone and output levels, and an acoustic guitar. The AM30 performed extremely well, with reproduction best

described as "glassy"—smooth, transparent and delicate, but in no way sterile. Zoning in on the amp and acoustic guitar's sweet spots demonstrated the mic's remarkable sensitivity and ability to capture every detail of sound. The AM30's warmth was most noticeable on the acoustic guitar. When applied to an amp set at high volume levels, it captured all the right harmonics while maintaining pin-sharp clarity and a focused low end.

The AM30 was a hard act to follow, but the AM40 came through with flying colors. Like the AM30, it boasts excellent sensitivity and clarity, but the tone is noticeably richer and fatter. On both electric and acoustic instruments, the AM40 added a gorgeous breathiness and a subtle ambience. With the AM40 applied to a loud amp, this characteristic response allowed riffs to "pump" a little, bringing a little extra dynamic to the tone.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The AM30 and AM40 actually enrich your sound and more than justify their painstaking construction time and prices. The AM30 captures every nuance of your tone without sterilizing it, and the AM40 adds a magical warmth to recordings, making it ideal for digital systems.

AKG.EMOTION

MICROPHONE

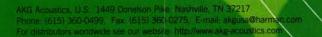
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- D 880: Super-cardioid vocal mic with great gain-before-feedback; new rugged steel mesh grille.
- D 880 S: Same as D 880 except with a silent on/off switch.



AKG.SOUNDS.BETTER

Alive& Gigging sound reinforcement in review

Intimate Mixing

Shure PSM 400 Wireless Personal Performance Pack. by Dominic Hilton

While at a concert, you may have noticed wires trailing, FBI-like, from the ears of your favorite band. So what are they listening to? A choreographer? Busta Rhymes? A football game broadcast? Actually, they're enjoying a comfortable, custom mix of their live set via "in-ear monitoring," as this technology is known. In-ear systems have become very popular with professional performers for a number of good reasons.

Traditionally, band members use a wedge monitor facing them from their "home base" position on the stage. This, however, causes a variety of problems. Although the monitored sound can be tailored for each member, it competes with the onstage sound. Also, if the player moves away from their wedge, to climb on top of the giant rubber dragon for example, they can no longer hear their own monitor:

In-ear systems, by nature, don't suffer from these problems. In addition, they can protect your hearing: a full-tilt rock concert can generate Sound Pressure Levels (SPLs) as high as those from a skybound 747. (Just imagine what standing behind a jumbo jet for three hours every night could do to your hearing.) Integrating form-fit earplugs with the earphones, in-ear monitors can deliver the perfect mix at the right volume, while blocking out the eardrum-splitting onstage roar.

Obviously, to make the most of such a system, it needs to be wireless. And who better than Shure to come up with the goods. Their PSM 400 package is the new affordable addition to the PSM range.

The PSM 400 pack contains three main components-a mixer, a transmitter and a receiver. The P4M mixer is a half-rack, metalcased unit that can deliver sound to four in-ear units. The mixer's front panel has four balanced "universal" connectors, which can accept both XLR and quarter-inch inputs. Next to these are the four corresponding mix controls. Each control is a concentric pot: the center pot controls the level and the outer ring controls the left/right stereo pan. In addition, each control has a three-color LED to provide signal strength feedback. The rear panel has four XLR outputs that duplicate the unaltered signals from the corresponding front-panel inputs, allowing the P4M mixer to be placed in-line, between the mic inputs and main mixing desk. A pair of quarter-inch mix-out sockets provide a two-channel mix for the receiver, while a pair of aux-in jacks allow two more line-level signals (such as a click track) to be



added to the mix out.

The P4T transmitter is also a rugged metal, half-rack unit and offers 16 frequency

mitged Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60202-2200; (847) 866-2200; fax: (847) 866-2279 www.shure.com

LIST PRICE: \$1.590

channels (eight simultaneously compatible) in the uncluttered UHF range. The front panel has input levels for both channels to indicate signal strength and status of the onboard limiter, and a transmission frequency LED that indicates which of the 16 UHF frequencies are in use. To make setting up the system easier, a local earphone output with level control is also included. The rear panel has the quarter-inch left/right inputs for connection to the P4M and a pair of loop-out jacks that can be used for recording or additional monitoring systems.

The final link in the system is the compact P4R receiver, which looks like a standard wireless transmitter pack but works in the opposite direction. Shure has managed to cram many features into the P4R's small casing. A large, center-notched knob handles the mix balance, and a grippy control on the top panel doubles as the volume and on/off switch. A backlit LCD screen provides plenty of information, from battery life and signal presence to channel number and feature modes. Small "scroll" and "select" buttons on the side of the unit allow selection of channels as well as modes, which include a limiter, high-frequency equalization (6dB at 10kHz for increased treble response) and something called "mixmode," which allows the mixed stereo output to be blended into one signal. In this way, two distinct monitor sources can be mixed together and adjusted with the balance control on the P4R.

In addition, the P4R comes with a pair of E1 low-mass, high-energy earphones, a variety of sleeves for various applications and ear size and a special tool for cleaning ear wax out of the transducers.

We tested the PSM 400 system with the outputs from a four-track recorder, allocating each a separate track to each of the P4M's channels. From there, it was a simple case of hooking up the P4M outputs to the P4T inputs and putting a battery in the P4R. After matching the frequency channels, we had a healthy, noise-free signal in the earphones. After a few minutes of mixing and panning with the P4M, we turned the rough source into a clean balanced mix at a comfortable volume level.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The benefits of this system in a live performance are easy to imagine. No more waving semaphore messages to the sound engineer when you're hearing deafening mush from your wedge—just walk over and remix your sound on the fly. Also, the wealth of connections allows countless set-up configurations for the PSM 400, including some very complex mixes, and all right in the comfort of your own ear.



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Surf City MUSIC WEBSITES IN REVIEW.

The Web on a String

Guitar Nine Records. by Brian Stillman

Anyone's who's ever surfed the internet for musicians resources will have no doubt noticed the multitude of sites dedicated to electronic music. And with good reason. The genre, by definition, has always held close ties to the computer world, so it's not surprising to find a gold mine of software and samples available for download. Many would say it's a match made in heaven.

Unless, of course, you play the guitar.

It's kind of depressing, really, that guitarists have such a meager musical presence on the web. Sure, a Yahoo! web search might lead you to *Screamin' Jimbo Jones' Site O' Six-String Madness*. And for a brief moment, you'll experience a rush of excitement as you anticipate a multi-megabyte dose of download bliss. But one click is all it takes to reveal that the best old Jimbo has in the way of content is the snazzy image of a construction worker located at the bottom of the screen—right next to the "Under Construction! Last update: 1996" notice that flashes pathetically amongst the sea of utter, bleak, digital *nothingness*.

Is this the best we can hope for? Are we consigned to some Luddite-birthed circle of internet hell where only the techno savvy survive?

Of course not. If the internet—with its Napsters, virtual shopping and here today—gone tomorrow fortunes—has proven anything, it's that those with a will can certainly find a way. And it's the will of Guitar Nine Records, purveyors of innovative guitar-based music, to provide the online community of guitarists with a place they can call their own.

The Guitar Nine Records web site (www.guitar9.com) serves two distinct purposes. The first, obviously, is to promote Guitar Nine artists. High up on the site's opening page are three pull-down menus—one each for acoustic, electric and heavy electric artists—that allow surfers to access any of the artists on the label's roster. From there, previewing and ordering the music is simple, following the shopping cart method that's become the norm on most retail web sites.

The designers of *Guitar Nine* get extra points for clearly defining the shopping elements without making them obtrusive—it's the equivalent of helpful store clerks as opposed to pushy ones. Customers can browse without feeling pushed toward the checkout line, but when the inspiration to spend does crop up, credit-card bliss is never more than a



mouse click away. Music fans with disposable incomes beware: with so much top-quality music, the site will empty your wallet as effectively as any Les Paul purchase.

The web site's second purpose is somewhat more interesting: to provide a bimonthly online newsletter designed to help indie guitarists gain a leg up in the chaotic, often hostile music industry. Some of the articles to appear in the August-September issue included "Music and the Business of Music: Thoughts for the Aspiring Musician" by Christopher Knab, "Artist Promotion Ideas" by Dan McAvinchey, and "Six Friends: Open Strings" by Dan DeTone, an illuminating article on how to play riffs and melodies without ever touching a fret. Also featured were profiles of 12 new undiscovered artists (readers are encouraged to submit material) as well as a registry of over 800 home and project studios. In addition, the newsletter has articles on a range of subjects, from self-promotion to new playing techniques, as well as tabbed lessons, and tips and tricks. Clearly, Guitar Nine is marketed toward the musician who wants to be as well-rounded as possible.

As a final treat, the site provides streaming internet radio, featuring—what else?—guitar music culled from Guitar Nine Records' warehouse of artists. It's a great

way to perk up an otherwise dreary day on the job or an evening of homework. It's also a wonderful opportunity to hear some excellent musicians who might have otherwise slipped under the radar. And remember, the full CDs are only a click away.

Despite all of its strengths, *Guitar Nine* suffers from a few small flaws. While ample graphics make the site pleasing on the eye, they also get in the way of speedy load times, even with a T1 connection. Though the slow speed isn't likely to turn readers off, it's time-consuming enough to elicit more than a couple grumbles.

A more important point of dissatisfaction stems from a less-than-ideal layout. Sure, it's nice to have all of the site's elements located on the index page. But so much information is provided that much of it runs below the screen—a no-no in web design circles. A better plan is to provide a table of contents with fewer graphics that presents the site in overview form. From there, individual stories and columns could be made as image-intensive as necessary.

Quibbles aside, Guitar Nine Records has done a fantastic job of making guitarists feel at home on the internet. With extensive resources and loads of insight, the *Guitar Nine* site should become a regular bookmark on many a musician's web browser.



Tech Education

THE INS & OUTS OF AXES & AMPS.

Fight the Power

How to take control of your stage volume. by Matt Bruck

I gig with my band regularly, mostly in clubs. I love the sound of my amp when I turn the volume up to about 5 or 6, but I'm just too loud for the size of the places we play. The soundman always wants me to turn down, but then I'm not happy with my tone. Help!

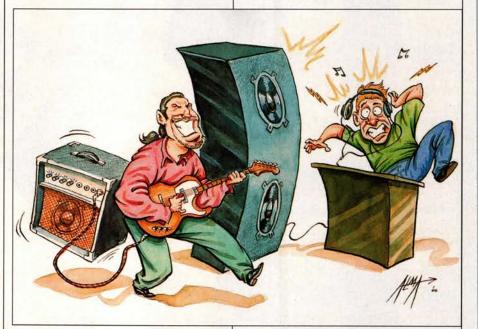
—Greg Clark Olney, PA

Man, I feel your pain! There's just nothing, like the sound of an amp being pushed into output distortion. Output distortion occurs when an amp reaches its volume threshold, at which point the output (power) tubes really have to work. In my experience, output distortion is so wonderfully warm, toneful, organic, responsive and musical that most guitar players can't resist it. The only problem is that it requires that an amp be turned up loud, which produces exactly the problem you're experiencing. Some people might recommend putting an overdrive pedal or fuzz box in front of the amp to make up for the distortion you lose when you play at a lower volume. But stompboxes are not output tubes and do not produce distortion the same way; consequently, the sound they produce will be different from what you want to achieve with your tube amp. The bottom line here is that there's just no substitute for the real thing.

But fear not, because the good folks at THD Electronics have the answer to your problem, and it's called a Hot Plate. Technically speaking, a Hot Plate is a "power attenuator." Once connected between an amplifier's speaker output and the speaker cabinet, the Hot Plate acts like a master volume control that lets you play your amp at any volume, absorbing most of the power generated by the amplifier and passing a small part of the power to the speaker. Your amp and its output tubes will still be cranked up, only now you'll be able to get the tone you want and control the overall volume after it leaves the amplifier but before it reaches the speaker.

The Hot Plate also serves as a great dummy load and has an adjustable line out for recording. So if you live in an apartment and want to record your 100-watt Marshall, you can disconnect your speaker, use the load setting on the Hot Plate and go direct into your mixing board.

There are five different Hot Plate models (2, 2.7, 4, 8 and 16 ohms), and although they all



perform the same function, you'll need to pick the one that matches your amp's impedance. Make no mistake, a Hot Plate is not just for a head-and-cabinet-type setup but for combo amps as well. For more information, check out the THD website at www.thdelectronics.com, or call (206) 781-5500.

I have an American Standard Strat, and when I use the tremolo, my guitar goes out of tune. Can I install a Floyd Rose locking tremolo on my guitar? Would it affect the tone, and how much would it cost?

> -DWILLS via teched@guitarworld.com

You absolutely can have a Floyd Rose locking tremolo installed in your Strat. But before doing that, you might want to try a few things to see if you can make the stock tremolo work the way you want it to, because it may not be the cause of your tuning problem.

On any guitar, it's important that the nut is cut properly and that the nut slots, through which the strings pass, are smooth, without any edges or burrs to snag the string when you bend a note or use the tremolo. To check their condition, tune the guitar and then bend a string, or use the tremolo just once, and check the tuning immediately afterward. If the guitar is out of tune, it could be due to abrasions withing the nut slots. These can be smoothed with special guitar nut files, but this

is a job best left to a qualified repairperson. On occasion, I've used little shavings of pencil lead in the slots to smooth out string travel and reduce friction.

Tuning problems can also arise if your strings are wound around the tuning peg too many times. I recommend no more or less than three windings. In addition, make sure that the windings around the tuning peg are neat and clean, as this will minimize slippage, which can be the cause of tune problems. It's also very important to stretch out your strings fully when you restring. I always know that my strings are properly stretched if I can stretch a string hard or do a huge bend and have string come back in tune, as indicated by my electronic tuner.

If you decide you still want to get a Floyd Rose, it goes without saying that installing it is a job for a professional. Expect to spend about \$190 for the unit and roughly \$150 for its installation. Floyd Rose trems work great and virtually eliminate tuning problems when they are new and properly maintained over time. The consensus on Floyds is that they eat up some low frequencies and make a guitar sound brighter and tighter. That trade-off of tone for tuning may or may not work for you—but that's a decision you'll have to make. Good luck!

Send your questions to Matt at: Tech Education, *Guitar World*, 1115 Broadway, 8th Fl., New York, NY 10010, or teched@guitarworld.com



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1. BOLOPICK

Strap Lock & Pick Holder

The BoloPick guitar and bass accessory clips over the strap and strap lock to provide a compartment for holding spare picks while it secures the strap to the instrument. BoloPicks are available in translucent colors, come with matching or contrasting picks and are available on neck chains and key chains. List price: \$5.98 (two per pack)

BoloPick, Inc. 40 Mulberry St., Suite 3-F, New York, NY 10013; (212) 619-1710; fax: (212) 608-4761; www.bolopick.com

2. PARKER

P-38 Guitar

The Parker P-38 guitar features a select ash body, Wilkinson vibrato bridge, maple neck, rosewood fingerboard and 22 jumbo nickel frets. In addition to custom-wound Parker alnico pickups, the P-38 features a custom Fishman piezo pickup for each string and a Fishman-designed active preamp with a "Smart Switching" output jack that can blend the magnetic and piezo signals together or split them to separate amplifiers. The P-38 guitar is available in sunburst, black, and transparent red or blue finishes. List price: \$849

Parker Guitars, P.O. Box 388, Wilmington, MA 01887; (978) 988-0102; fax: (978) 988-8077; www.parkerguitars.com

3. GODLYKE, INC.

EXP-2001 Bixonic Expandora II Distortion Pedal

The EXP-2001 is an upgrade of the original Bixonic Expandora, with true bypass switching, increased low-end frequency response, LED effect status/input level indicators and front panel controls for drive, gain, tone and level. The original Expandora's internal DIP switches are replaced with an external drive knob that allows on-the-fly tweaking. List price: \$229 Godlyke, Inc., P.O. Box, 4677 Wayne, NJ 07474-4677; (973) 835-2100; www.bixonic.com

4. ASPECT DESIGN LABS

JuiceBox Pedalboard Power Supply

The JuiceBox is the first pedalboard power supply to offer fully regulated outputs for all common FX voltages, including 9, 13.2, and 18 volts DC. The unit is designed for ultra-low-noise operation and has four isolated DC outputs for powering up to 10 pedals from the front panel. The JuiceBox also features a fully isolated, fuse-protected 9-volt AC output and provides a full-size 120-volt AC three-prong courtesy outlet. List price: \$269

Aspect Design Labs, 25 Grove Place, Suwanee, GA, 30024; fax: (770) 339-0711; www.pedalboard.com

5. IBANEZ

TR50R Tone Blaster Amplifier

The Ibanez Tone Blaster 50-watt amplifier features a 12-inch Ibanez Power Jam speaker; footswitchable reverb, discrete clean and overdrive channels with independent active three-band eq and level controls, "crunch" circuit (clean channel), speaker extension jack, effects loop, headphone jack, footswitch jack and open-back cabinet. List price: \$329.99

Ibanez Guitars, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020; (215) 638-8670; www.ibanez.com

6. SUMMIT GUITAR PACK

The Minstrel Guitar Bag

The Minstrel is designed for dreadnought-style acoustics. It has a rigid frame on the sound-board side for extra protection and stable suspension, thick foam padding, heavy-duty nylon construction, an auxiliary detachable bag with zippered pockets and organizer for gear, detailed backpack straps and waistbelt, and a convenient bungee cord for quick stowage of miscellaneous items. List price: \$120

Summit Guitar Pack, 206 Florentia St., Ste. 2, Seattle WA 98109; 800-236-8830, (206) 285-5228; www.guitarbackpack.com

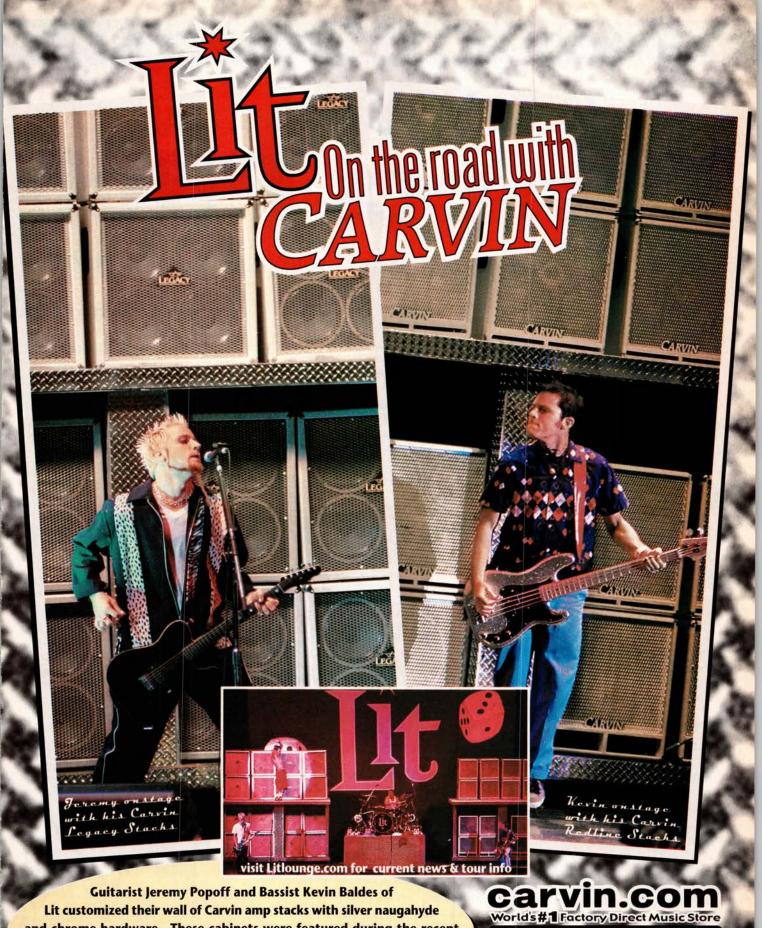
7. PLANET WAVES

Instrument Cables

Planet Waves' new line of instrument cables features gold-plated plugs with compression springs that guarantee a positive connection, double-molded connectors that provide extra protection with unmatched strain relief, and a special double-insulated/double-shielded cable design that provides the cleanest signal available, while eliminating hum and noise. Each cable carries a lifetime warranty and comes with color-coded O-rings that allow for easy identification when multiple cables are used. List price \$19.99-39.99

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(continued next page...)

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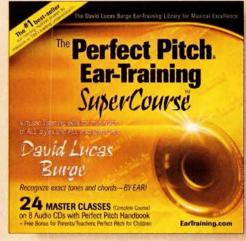
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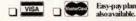
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Banner," "Jam Back at the House," "Izabella," "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" and "Villanova Junction," as well as the thrilling "Woodstock Improvisation," all make this set essential.

JIMI HENDRIX: MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

RELEASE DATE: 1999 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

This one is an oddball, but is nonetheless thoroughly enjoyable. It offers two mixes of a medley, "Little Drummer Boy/Silent Night/Auld Lang Syne," recorded by the Band of Gypsys on December 19, 1969 at Baggy's, a New York rehearsal studio, as the group prepared for their

upcoming New Year's Eve Fillmore East shows.

JIMI HENDRIX: LIVE AT THE OAKLAND COLISEUM

RELEASE DATE: 1998 (DAGGER)

Live at the Oakland Coliseum is the debut release from Dagger Records (www.jimi-hendrix.com), the subsidiary label started by Experience Hendrix in order to present "inspired performances which don't meet the technical recording criteria and sonic high standards Hendrix established over the course of his short but spectacular career. Dagger recordings...are specifically directed at fans who have enjoyed Jimi's authorized masterworks but still want to hear more." This two-disc set is a bootleg "audi-

ence" recording of the Experience's complete April 27, 1969 concert, which culminates with an extended 18-minute jam on "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)," featuring Jefferson Airplane bassist (and frequent jamming collaborator) Jack Casady.

Though the recording quality is a bit "woolly," there is no denying the vibrant excitement put forth on a nightly basis by the Experience, of which this set offers ample testimony.

JIMI HENDRIX: LIVE AT CLARK UNIVERSITY

RELEASE DATE: 1999 (DAGGER)

Live at Clark University is the only-known documentation of the Jimi Hendrix Experience's March 15, 1968 performance at the small Massachusetts college, and it captures the evolution of this still-young, highly charged ensemble. Though only five songs are included—the highlight of which is the smoking version of "Red House"—the disc also offers terrific preand post-concert interviews with Jimi, the former of which is over 20 minutes in length.

JIMI HENDRIX: MORNING SYMPHONY IDEAS

RELEASE DATE: 2000 (DAGGER)

This latest Dagger release offers a handful of very intimate glimpses into Jimi's creative process, as it illuminates his penchant for

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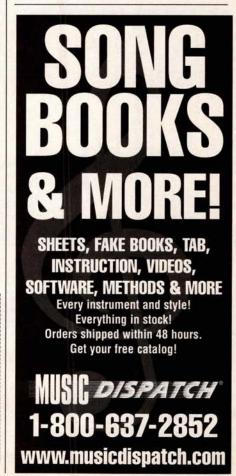
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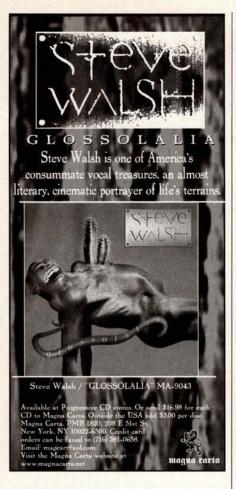
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hammering out new material in studio jams, often working with just a drummer (in this case, Buddy Miles). The startling intimacy of these recordings is accentuated by the superb recording quality; the effect is nothing short of voyeuristic. "Keep On Grooving" is a halfhour jam with Miles, recorded at the Record Plant during Band of Gypsys rehearsals, and one can hear Jimi quoting elements of future compositions such as "Power of Soul," "Burning Desire" and "Stepping Stone." The second half of this jam is "Jungle," during which one can hear strands of "Villanova Junction" and "Ezy Rider."

The most thrilling cut, however, is "Scorpio Woman (Morning Symphony Ideas)," a beautifully recorded 21-minute piece which incorporates-as described in the album liner notes-"tantalizing snatches of 'Midnight Lightning,' 'Heaven Has No Sorrow' and other familiar phrases and rhythm patterns advanced by the guitarist in 1969 and 1970."

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BAND OF GYPSYS

(EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

Band of Gypsys is an 83-minute video which restores this archival concert footage to neverbefore-seen quality, and combines it with other rare footage of Jimi, along with insightful interviews with those who knew Jimi best.

JIMI HENDRIX: LIVE AT WOODSTOCK

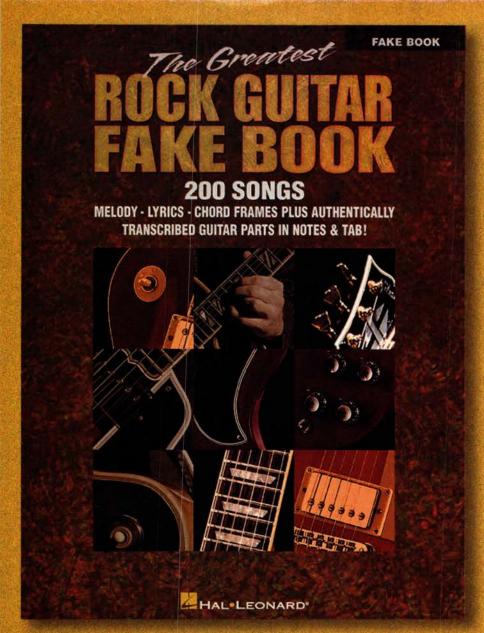
(EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/MCA)

Like Band of Gypsys, Live at Woodstock offers visual evidence of Jimi's legendary performance at the greatest rock concert ever held. While the 1970 film Woodstock contained but a tiny snippet of Jimi's set (specifically, his earth-shattering rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner"), this 57-minute, beautifully shot video provides the viewer with the rare opportunity to live (or relive, for those who were there) the "experience."

THE MAKING OF **ELECTRIC LADYLAND**

(EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/RHINO)

Originally produced for VH1, The Making of Electric Ladyland takes the viewer on a journey through the creation of this timeless masterpiece. Engineer Eddie Kramer, seated behind the mixing console, fervently yanks faders up and down, pulling instruments in and out of the mix to illustrate the structure and development of such tracks as "Burning of the Midnight Lamp," "House Burning Down," "Voodoo Chile" and "Long Hot Summer Night." He is also joined in the studio by Jimi's original producer, Chas Chandler, as the two discuss everything from Jimi's work ethic to his penchant for inviting anyone to the studio to hang out and/or join the proceedings. Further insight is provided by Mitch Mitchell, Buddy Miles, Noel Redding and Jack Casady, among others. .



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l.	Crate	www.crateamps.com	314-727-4512		RECORDS/CD'S		
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ROCK STARS

BY DAISY

AFICS MARCH 21 — APRIL 19 This month you should stay on the down low, Aries. You independent rams need your alone time all-year round, but this month you'll be totally private. Spend time contemplating your next move; it is a crucial one, and all angles must be considered. Famous Aries: Peter Green

Taurus Appll. 20 — MAY 20 A full moon in your sign, Taurus, makes you quite emotional. Don't make the mistake of holding it all in, like you usually do—this month just let it all out. You'll feel like a new person once you vent toxic feelings Famous Taurus: Mike McCready

Germini MAY 21 – JUNE 20 You'll finally be able to think straight again as the month begins and Mercury, your ruling planet, goes direct. You'll be sharper than ever when it comes to negotiating, especially when it comes to business, so make sure you do the talking when it counts. Famous Germini: Slouxie Sioux

Cancel JUNE 21 – JULY 22 At heart, you are a romantic, and in November you'll pull out all the stops to show your special someone just how much you care. You could be hyper sensitive as well, though, so try not to overreact if your s.o. isn't as lovey-dovey as you would like. Famous Cancer: Courtney Love

LCO JULY 23 – AUGUST 22 A one-on-one relationship gains deeper significance this month as you open up to your partner. Don't let your insecurities deter you from truly exposing yourself to someone special in your life. Famous Leo: Jerry Garcia

VIYO AUGUST 23 — SEPTEMBER 22 Break out of that rigid structure this month, Virgo. As you relax and go with the flow, your work becomes freer. A period of explosive creativity will begin as you let go of old patterns and discover new ones.

Famous Virgo: Fiona Apple

Libra SEPTEMBER 23 – OCTOBER 22 This month you'll be more assertive than usual, which could freak you usually laid-back Librans out. Rather than fight those weird urges to defend yourself, speak out, fight for your rights and get into it!

Famous Libra: Bob Mould

SCOPPIO OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 22 Happy Birthday, Scorpio! Celebrate by getting your closest friends together for an intimate gathering and tell them how important they are to you. Your penetrating insight reaches new heights and is the source of endless artistic innovation and explosive creativity. Famous Scorpio: The Beastie Boys' Mike D.

Sagillarius November 23 – DECEMBER 20 You'll enjoy a highly spiritual connection with your creative expression in November. Support from someone unexpected may actually lead to career advancement, so don't write off an unlikely connection as a bull-shit artist right off the bat. Famous Sagittarius: Jakob Dylan

Capricorn December 21 – JANUARY 19 Recognition for past work will boost your ego and get you moving this month. Friends are usually a source of support, but this month try not to depend too heavily on others: you could be sorely disappointed. Famous Capricorn: Dave Matthews

AQUATIUS JANUARY 20 – FEBRUARY 18 Opportunities abound on the social scene—both on the personal and professional fronts. You could meet someone you dig at a party; take a subtle approach. You'll also make major contacts that will propel your career forward. Famous Aquarius: Johnny Bristol

PISCES FEBRUARY 19 — MARCH 20 Get the practical side of your life together this month, Pisces. After you get those boring chores taken care of, you'll be able to enjoy your precious time with your artistic work that much more. Famous Pisces: John Cale

THE PAGE BEFORE THE END PAGE

TETAL DY JEFF GILBERT DETECTOR

ORIGIN Origin (Relapse) With vocals hacked and coughed into a dulcet phlegm, Origin leaves one unable to appreciate the intricate lyrical nuances of "The Bonecrusher Chronicles" and "Yomit You Out." Then again, when the music sounds like 100 monkeys beating on coffee cans, you just have to be thankful for what you get.

BESEICH Black Emotions (Pavement) Gothic-y Swedish metal without the pleated choir robes. There's the occasional goofy lyric ("get inside my firecircle, hand in hand we burn"), but it's small change when compared to the unlit riffing. Coincidentally, "firecircle" is what I've been calling my toilet for years.

FORLORN Opus III—Ad Caeltis Res (Napalm) And the Gods of Theatrical Thrash thus spoke and told Forlorn to go into the darkness and scream as if burning over a rotisserie of demonic briquettes. And Forlorn did what they were told. Monk rock at its finest.

SQUEALER The Prophecy (Metal Blade) Dang. Considering their name, I was hoping for something that sounded like breakfast pigs grunting out their pork-filled discontent to the strains of a muddy guitar. Instead I get prog squealing smeared in harmonies and augmented diminished 7th chords. What's worse, there's not one song about butt sausage.

BENÜMB Withering Strands of Hope (Relapse) Advertised as "hostile hardcore grind," That's like saying "free naked chicks and beer!" A musical fist fight. We have a winner.

Jeff Gilbert was the tight end on his high school football

AR SAM BY JIM RYAN















JAMES LYNN STRAIT Pock Star 1968 1968 1968 DOBBS



JAMES LYNN STRAIT 1968-1998 James Lynn Strait knew the value of comic relief. In the mid

Nineties, while SoCal's countless hardcore acts were brewing their obligatory rants against the establishment, Strait was slipping politically incorrect and often self-abasing humor into the punk-metal scorchers churned out by his group, Snot. His off-center sensibility proved to be right on the money, and Snot quickly became the darlings of L.A.'s infested punk scene. "We can get serious and tear your head off," Strait once said. "But we also make fun of everybody, including ourselves."

Born in 1968 in Manhasset, New York, Strait spent his teen years in Santa Barbara, soaking up the SoCal music scene. Eventually, he landed a spot as bass player in the punk band Lethal Dose and met Mike Doling, a guitarist with the speed-metal group Kronix. It was Doling who in 1995 suggested they form a band by the what-the-hell

name of Snot. "We figured, who would take us seriously?" says Doling. "Who would sign a band called Snot?"

Geffen Records did, in 1996, and the group's debut, Get Some, appeared the next year. Although only a modest hit with hardcore fans, the album earned Snot a spot on the 1998 Ozzfest. It was during the tour's stop in Mansfield, Massachusetts, that Strait exposed himself, literally, to a wider audience by appearing nude onstage during Limp Bizkit's set. He was charged with a felony and a court date was set for January 1999.

The hearing never took place. On December 11, 1998, Strait was exiting the 101 freeway near Santa Barbara when his car collided with a truck. He was killed, along with his dog, Dobbs, who had appeared on *Get Some*'s cover. Strait is buried in Santa Barbara.

—Christopher Scapelliti



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